

Thee coil'd in evil times my country, with craft and black
 dismay, with every meanness, treason thrust upon thee,
 This common marvel I beheld—the parent thrush I
 watch'd feeding its young,
 The singing thrush whose tones of joy and faith ecstatic,
 Fail not to certify and cheer my soul.

There ponder'd, felt I,
 If worms, snakes, loathsome grubs, may to sweet spiritual
 songs be turn'd,
 If vermin so transposed, so used and bless'd may be,
 Then may I trust in you, your fortunes, days, my country ;
 Who knows but these may be the lessons fit for you ?
 From these your future song may rise with joyous trills,
 Destin'd to fill the world.

ITALIAN MUSIC IN DAKOTA

(“ *The Seventeenth—the finest Regimental Band I ever heard* ”)

THROUGH the soft evening air enwinding all,
 Rocks, woods, fort, cannon, pacing sentries, endless wilds,
 In dulcet streams, in flutes' and cornets' notes,
 Electric, pensive, turbulent, artificial,
 (Yet strangely fitting even here, meanings unknown before,
 Subtler than ever, more harmony, as if born here, related
 here,
 Not to the city's fresco'd rooms, not to the audience of the
 opera house,
 Sounds, echoes, wandering strains, as really here at home,
Sonnambula's innocent love, trios with *Norma's* anguish,
 And thy ecstatic chorus *Poliuto* ;)
 Ray'd in the limpid yellow slanting sundown,
 Music, Italian music in Dakota.

While Nature, sovereign of this gnarl'd realm,
 Lurking in hidden barbaric grim recesses,
 Acknowledging rapport however far remov'd,
 (As some old root or soil of earth its last-born flower or
 fruit,)
 Listens well pleas'd.

WITH ALL THY GIFTS

With all thy gifts America,
Standing secure, rapidly tending, overlooking the world,
Power, wealth, extent, vouchsafed to thee—with these and
like of these vouchsafed to thee,
What if one gift thou lackest? (the ultimate human problem never solving,)
The gift of perfect women fit for thee—what if that gift of gifts thou lackest?
The towering feminine of thee? the beauty, health, completion, fit for thee?
The mothers fit for thee?

MY PICTURE-GALLERY

In a little house keep I pictures suspended, it is not a fix'd house,
It is round, it is only a few inches from one side to the other;
Yet behold, it has room for all the shows of the world, all memories!
Here the tableaux of life, and here the groupings of death;
Here, do you know this? this is cicerone himself,
With finger rais'd he points to the prodigal pictures.

THE PRAIRIE STATES

A NEWER garden of creation, no primal solitude,
Dense, joyous, modern, populous millions, cities and farms,
With iron interlaced, composite, tied, many in one,
By all the world contributed—freedom's and law's and thrift's society,
The crown and teeming paradise, so far, of time's accumulations,
To justify the past.

PROUD MUSIC OF THE STORM

1

PROUD music of the storm,
Blast that careers so free, whistling across the prairies,
Strong hum of forest tree-tops—wind of the mountains,
Personified dim shapes—you hidden orchestras,
You serenades of phantoms with instruments alert,
Blending with Nature's rhythmus all the tongues of nations ;
You chords left as by vast composers—you choruses,
You formless, free, religious dances—you from the Orient,
You undertone of rivers, roar of pouring cataracts,
You sounds from distant guns with galloping cavalry,
Echoes of camps with all the different bugle-calls,
Trooping tumultuous, filling the midnight late, bending
me powerless,
Entering my lonesome slumber-chamber, why have you
seiz'd me ?

2

Come forward O my soul, and let the rest retire,
Listen, lose not, it is toward thee they tend,
Parting the midnight, entering my slumber-chamber,
For thee they sing and dance O soul.

A festival song,
The duet of the bridegroom and the bride, a marriage-
march,
With lips of love, and hearts of lovers fill'd to the brim
with love,
The red-flush'd cheeks and perfumes, the cortege swarming
full of friendly faces young and old,
To flutes' clear notes and sounding harps' cantabile.

Now loud approaching drums,
Victoria ! see'st thou in powder-smoke the banners torn
but flying ? the rout of the baffled ?
Hearest those shouts of a conquering army ?

(Ah soul, the sobs of women, the wounded groaning in
agony,
The hiss and crackle of flames, the blacken'd ruins, the
embers of cities,
The dirge and desolation of mankind.)

Now airs antique and mediæval fill me,
I see and hear old harpers with their harps at Welsh
festivals,
I hear the minnesingers singing their lays of love,
I hear the minstrels, gleemen, troubadours, of the middle
ages.

Now the great organ sounds,
Tremulous, while underneath, (as the hid footholds of the
earth,
On which arising rest, and leaping forth depend,
All shapes of beauty, grace and strength, all hues we know,
Green blades of grass and warbling birds, children that
gambol and play, the clouds of heaven above,)
The strong base stands, and its pulsation intermits not,
Bathing, supporting, merging all the rest, maternity of all
the rest,
And with it every instrument in multitudes,
The players playing, all the world's musicians,
The solemn hymns and masses rousing adoration,
All passionate heart-chants, sorrowful appeals,
The measureless sweet vocalists of ages,
And for their solvent setting earth's own diapason,
Of winds and woods and mighty ocean waves,
A new composite orchestra, binder of years and climes,
ten-fold renewer,
As of the far-back days the poets tell, the Paradiso,
The straying thence, the separation long, but now the
wandering done,
The journey done, the journeyman come home,
The man and art with Nature fused again.
Tutti! for earth and heaven;
(The Almighty leader now for once has signal'd with his
wand.)

The manly strophe of the husbands of the world,
And all the wives responding.

The tongues of violins,
(I think O tongues ye tell this heart, that cannot tell itself,
This brooding yearning heart, that cannot tell itself.)

3

Ah from a little child,
Thou knowest soul how to me all sounds became music,
My mother's voice in lullaby or hymn,
(The voice, O tender voices, memory's loving voices,
Last miracle of all, O dearest mother's, sister's, voices ;)
The rain, the growing corn, the breeze among the long-
leav'd corn,
The measur'd sea-surf beating on the sand,
The twittering bird, the hawk's sharp scream,
The wild-fowl's notes at night as flying low migrating north
or south,
The psalm in the country church or mid the clustering
trees, the open air camp-meeting,
The fiddler in the tavern, the glee, the long-strung sailor-
song,
The lowing cattle, bleating sheep, the crowing cock at
dawn.

All songs of current lands come sounding round me,
The German airs of friendship, wine and love,
Irish ballads, merry jigs and dances, English warbles,
Chansons of France, Scotch tunes, and o'er the rest,
Italia's peerless compositions.

Across the stage with pallor on her face, yet lurid passion,
Stalks Norma brandishing the dagger in her hand.

I see poor crazed Lucia's eyes' unnatural gleam,
Her hair down her back falls loose and dishevel'd.

I see where Ernani walking the bridal garden,
Amid the scent of night-roses, radiant, holding his bride
by the hand,
Hears the infernal call, the death-pledge of the horn.

To crossing swords and gray hairs bared to heaven,
The clear electric base and baritone of the world,
The trombone duo, Libertad forever !

From Spanish chestnut trees' dense shade,
By old and heavy convent walls a wailing song,
Song of lost love, the torch of youth and life quench'd in
 despair,
Song of the dying swan, Fernando's heart is breaking.

Awaking from her woes at last retriev'd Amina sings,
Copious as stars and glad as morning light the torrents of
 her joy.

(The teeming lady comes,
The lustrous orb, Venus contralto, the blooming mother,
Sister of loftiest gods, Alboni's self I hear.)

4

I hear those odes, symphonies, operas,
I hear in the *William Tell* the music of an arous'd and
 angry people,
I hear Meyerbeer's *Huguenots*, the *Prophet*, or *Robert*,
Gounod's *Faust*, or Mozart's *Don Juan*.

I hear the dance-music of all nations,
The waltz, some delicious measure, lapsing, bathing me in
 bliss,
The bolero to tinkling guitars and clattering castanets.

I see religious dances old and new,
I hear the sound of the Hebrew lyre,
I see the crusaders marching bearing the cross on high,
 to the martial clang of cymbals,
I hear dervishes monotonously chanting, interspers'd with
 frantic shouts, as they spin around turning always
 towards Mecca,
I see the rapt religious dances of the Persians and the Arabs,
Again, at Eleusis, home of Ceres, I see the modern Greeks
 dancing,

I hear them clapping their hands as they bend their bodies,
I hear the metrical shuffling of their feet.

I see again the wild old Corybantian dance, the performers
 wounding each other,

I see the Roman youth to the shrill sound of flageolets
 throwing and catching their weapons,
As they fall on their knees and rise again.

I hear from the Mussulman mosque the muezzin calling,
I see the worshippers within, nor form nor sermon, argu-
ment nor word,
But silent, strange, devout, rais'd, glowing heads, ecstatic
faces.

I hear the Egyptian harp of many strings,
The primitive chants of the Nile boatmen,
The sacred imperial hymns of China,
To the delicate sounds of the king, (the stricken wood and
stone,)
Or to Hindu flutes and the fretting twang of the vina,
A band of bayaderes.

5

Now Asia, Africa leave me, Europe seizing inflates me,
To organs huge and bands I hear as from vast concourses
of voices,
Luther's strong hymn *Eine feste Burg ist unser Gott*,
Rossini's *Stabat Mater dolorosa*,
Or floating in some high cathedral dim with gorgeous
color'd windows,
The passionate *Agnus Dei* or *Gloria in Excelsis*.

Composers! mighty maestros!
And you, sweet singers of old lands, soprani, tenori, bassi!
To you a new bard caroling in the West,
Obeisant sends his love.

(Such led to thee O soul,
All senses, shows and objects, lead to thee,
But now it seems to me sound leads o'er all the rest.)

I hear the annual singing of the children in St. Paul's
cathedral,
Or, under the high roof of some colossal hall, the symphonies,
oratorios of Beethoven, Handel, or Haydn,
The *Creation* in billows of godhood laves me.

Give me to hold all sounds, (I madly struggling cry,)
Fill me with all the voices of the universe,
Endow me with their throbbings, Nature's also,

The tempests, waters, winds, operas and chants, marches
and dances,
Utter, pour in, for I would take them all !

6

Then I woke softly,
And pausing, questioning awhile the music of my dream,
And questioning all those reminiscences, the tempest in its
fury,
And all the songs of sopranos and tenors,
And those rapt oriental dances of religious fervor,
And the sweet varied instruments, and the diapason of
organs,
And all the artless plaints of love and grief and death,
I said to my silent curious soul out of the bed of the slumber-
chamber,
Come, for I have found the clew I sought so long, .
Let us go forth refresh'd amid the day,
Cheerfully tallying life, walking the world, the real,
Nourish'd henceforth by our celestial dream.

And I said, moreover,
Haply what thou hast heard O soul was not the sound of
winds,
Nor dream of raging storm, nor sea-hawk's flapping wings
nor harsh scream,
Nor vocalism of sun-bright Italy,
Nor German organ majestic, nor vast concourse of voices,
nor layers of harmonies,
Nor strophes of husbands and wives, nor sound of marching
soldiers,
Nor flutes, nor harps, nor the bugle-calls of camps,
But to a new rhythmus fitted for thee,
Poems bridging the way from Life to Death, vaguely
wafted in night air, uncaught, unwritten,
Which let us go forth in the bold day and write.

PASSAGE TO INDIA

1

SINGING my days,
Singing the great achievements of the present,
Singing the strong light works of engineers,
Our modern wonders, (the antique ponderous Seven
outvied,)

In the Old World the east the Suez canal,
The New by its mighty railroad spann'd,
The seas inlaid with eloquent gentle wires ;
Yet first to sound, and ever sound, the cry with thee O
soul,
The Past ! the Past ! the Past !

The Past—the dark unfathom'd retrospect !
The teeming gulf—the sleepers and the shadows !
The past—the infinite greatness of the past !
For what is the present after all but a growth out of the
past ?
(As a projectile form'd, impell'd, passing a certain line,
still keeps on,
So the present, utterly form'd, impell'd by the past.)

2

Passage O soul to India !
Eclaircise the myths Asiatic, the primitive fables.

Not you alone proud truths of the world,
Nor you alone ye facts of modern science,
But myths and fables of eld, Asia's, Africa's fables,
The far-darting beams of the spirit, the unloos'd dreams,
The deep diving bibles and legends,
The daring plots of the poets, the elder religions ;
O you temples fairer than lilies pour'd over by the rising
sun !
O you fables spurning the known, eluding the hold of the
known, mounting to heaven !

You lofty and dazzling towers, pinnacled, red as roses,
burnish'd with gold !
Towers of fables immortal fashion'd from mortal dreams !
You too I welcome and fully the same as the rest !
You too with joy I sing.

Passage to India !

Lo, soul, seest thou not God's purpose from the first ?
The earth to be spann'd, connected by network,
The races, neighbours, to marry and be given in marriage,
The oceans to be cross'd, the distant brought near,
The lands to be welded together.

A worship new I sing,

You captains, voyagers, explorers, yours,
You engineers, you architects, machinists, yours,
You, not for trade or transportation only,
But in God's name, and for thy sake O soul.

3

Passage to India !

Lo soul for thee of tableaux twain,
I see in one the Suez canal initiated, open'd,
I see the procession of steamships, the Empress Eugenie's
leading the van,
I mark from on deck the strange landscape, the pure sky,
the level sand in the distance,
I pass swiftly the picturesque groups, the workmen
gather'd,
The gigantic dredging machines.

In one again, different, (yet thine, all thine, O soul, the
same,)

I see over my own continent the Pacific railroad surmount-
ing every barrier,
I see continual trains of cars winding along the Platte
carrying freight and passengers,
I hear the locomotives rushing and roaring, and the shrill
steam-whistle,
I hear the echoes reverberate through the grandest scenery
in the world,
I cross the Laramie plains, I note the rocks in grotesque
shapes, the buttes,

I see the plentiful larkspur and wild onions, the barren,
colorless, sage-deserts,
I see in glimpses afar or towering immediately above me
the great mountains, I see the Wind river and the
Wahsatch mountains,
I see the Monument mountain and the Eagle's Nest, I pass
the Promontory, I ascend the Nevadas,
I scan the noble Elk mountain and wind around its base,
I see the Humboldt range, I thread the valley and cross
the river,
I see the clear waters of lake Tahoe, I see forests of majestic
pines,
Or crossing the great desert, the alkaline plains, I behold
enchancing mirages of waters and meadows,
Marking through these and after all, in duplicate slender
lines,
Bridging the three or four thousand miles of land travel,
Tying the Eastern to the Western sea,
The road between Europe and Asia.

(Ah Genoese thy dream ! thy dream !
Centuries after thou art laid in thy grave,
The shore thou foundest verifies thy dream.)

4

Passage to India !
Struggles of many a captain, tales of many a sailor
dead,
Over my mood stealing and spreading they come,
Like clouds and cloudlets in the unreach'd sky.
Along all history, down the slopes,
As a rivulet running, sinking now, and now again to the
surface rising,
A ceaseless thought, a varied train—lo, soul, to thee, thy
sight, they rise,
The plans, the voyages again, the expeditions ;
Again Vasco de Gama sails forth,
Again the knowledge gain'd, the mariner's compass,
Lands found and nations born, thou born America,
For purpose vast, man's long probation fill'd,
Thou rondure of the world at last accomplish'd.

5

O vast Rondure, swimming in space,
Cover'd all over with visible power and beauty,
Alternate light and day and the teeming spiritual darkness,
Unspeakable high processions of sun and moon and countless
stars above,

Below, the manifold grass and waters, animals, mountains,
trees,

With inscrutable purpose, some hidden prophetic intention,
Now first it seems my thought begins to span thee.

Down from the gardens of Asia descending radiating,
Adam and Eve appear, then their myriad progeny after
them,

Wandering, yearning, curious, with restless explorations,
With questionings, baffled, formless, feverish, with never-
happy hearts,

With that sad incessant refrain, *Wherefore unsatisfied soul ?*
and *Whither O mocking life ?*

Ah who shall soothe these feverish children ?

Who justify these restless explorations ?

Who speak the secret of impassive earth ?

Who bind it to us ? what is this separate Nature so un-
natural ?

What is this earth to our affections ? (unloving earth,
without a throb to answer ours,

Cold earth, the place of graves.)

Yet soul be sure the first intent remains, and shall be carried
out,

Perhaps even now the time has arrived.

After the seas are all cross'd, (as they seem already cross'd,)
After the great captains and engineers have accomplish'd
their work,

After the noble inventors, after the scientists, the chemist,
the geologist, ethnologist,

Finally shall come the poet worthy that name,

The true son of God shall come singing his songs.

Then not your deeds only O voyagers, O scientists and
 inventors, shall be justified,
 All these hearts as of fretted children shall be sooth'd,
 All affection shall be fully responded to, the secret shall be
 told,
 All these separations and gaps shall be taken up and hook'd
 and link'd together,
 The whole earth, this cold, impassive, voiceless earth, shall
 be completely justified,
 Trinitas divine shall be gloriously accomplish'd and com-
 pacted by the true son of God, the poet,
 (He shall indeed pass the straits and conquer the mountains,
 He shall double the cape of Good Hope to some purpose,)
 Nature and Man shall be disjoin'd and diffused no more,
 The true son of God shall absolutely fuse them.

6

Year at whose wide-flung door I sing !
 Year of the purpose accomplish'd !
 Year of the marriage of continents, climates and oceans !
 (No mere doge of Venice now wedding the Adriatic,)
 I see O year in you the vast terraqueous globe given and
 giving all,
 Europe to Asia, Africa join'd, and they to the New World,
 The lands, geographies, dancing before you, holding a
 festival garland,
 As brides and bridegrooms hand in hand.

Passage to India !

Cooling airs from Caucasus far, soothing cradle of man,
 The river Euphrates flowing, the past lit up again.

Lo soul, the retrospect brought forward,
 The old, most populous, wealthiest of earth's lands,
 The streams of the Indus and the Ganges and their many
 affluents,

(I my shores of America walking to-day behold, resuming
 all,)

The tale of Alexander on his warlike marches suddenly
 dying,

On one side China and on the other side Persia and Arabia,
 To the south the great seas and the bay of Bengal,

The flowing literatures, tremendous epics, religions, castes,
Old occult Brahma interminably far back, the tender and
junior Buddha,
Central and southern empires and all their belongings,
possessors,
The wars of Tamerlane, the reign of Aurungzebe,
The traders, rulers, explorers, Moslems, Venetians, Byzan-
tium, the Arabs, Portuguese,
The first travelers famous yet, Marco Polo, Batouta the
Moor,
Doubts to be solv'd, the map incognita, blanks to be fill'd,
The foot of man unstay'd, the hands never at rest,
Thyself O soul that will not brook a challenge.

The mediæval navigators rise before me,
The world of 1492, with its awaken'd enterprise,
Something swelling in humanity now like the sap of the
earth in spring,
The sunset splendor of chivalry declining.

And who art thou sad shade ?
Gigantic, visionary, thyself a visionary,
With majestic limbs and pious beaming eyes,
Spreading around with every look of thine a golden world,
Enhuing it with gorgeous hues.

As the chief histrion,
Down the footlights walks in some great scena,
Dominating the rest I see the Admiral himself,
(History's type of courage, action, faith,)
Behold him sail from Palos leading his little fleet,
His voyage behold, his return, his great fame,
His misfortunes, calumniators, behold him a prisoner,
chain'd,
Behold his dejection, poverty, death.

(Curious in time I stand, noting the efforts of heroes,
Is the deferment long ? bitter the slander, poverty, death ?
Lies the seed unreck'd for centuries in the ground ? lo,
to God's due occasion,
Uprising in the night, it sprouts, blooms,
And fills the earth with use and beauty.)

7

Passage indeed O soul to primal thought,
Not lands and seas alone, thy own clear freshness,
The young maturity of brood and bloom,
To realms of budding bibles.

O soul, repressless, I with thee and thou with me,
Thy circumnavigation of the world begin,
Of man, the voyage of his mind's return,
To reason's early paradise,
Back, back to wisdom's birth, to innocent intuitions,
Again with fair creation.

8

O we can wait no longer,
We too take ship O soul,
Joyous we too launch out on trackless seas,
Fearless for unknown shores on waves of ecstasy to sail,
Amid the wafting winds, (thou pressing me to thee, I thee
to me, O soul,)
Caroling free, singing our song of God,
Chanting our chant of pleasant exploration.

With laugh and many a kiss,
(Let others deprecate, let others weep for sin, remorse,
humiliation,)
O soul thou pleasest me, I thee.

Ah more than any priest O soul we too believe in God,
But with the mystery of God we dare not dally.

O soul thou pleasest me, I thee,
Sailing these seas or on the hills, or waking in the night,
Thoughts, silent thoughts, of Time and Space and Death,
like waters flowing,
Bear me indeed as through the regions infinite,
Whose air I breathe, whose ripples hear, lave me all over,
Bathe me O God in thee, mounting to thee,
I and my soul to range in range of thee.

O Thou transcendent,
Nameless, the fibre and the breath,

Light of the light, shedding forth universes, thou centre
of them,

Thou mightier centre of the true, the good, the loving,
Thou moral, spiritual fountain—affection's source—thou
reservoir,

(O pensive soul of me—O thirst unsatisfied—waitest not
there ?

Waitest not haply for us somewhere there the Comrade
perfect ?)

Thou pulse—thou motive of the stars, suns, systems,

That, circling, move in order, safe, harmonious,

Athwart the shapeless vastnesses of space,

How should I think, how breathe a single breath, how
speak, if, out of myself,

I could not launch, to those, superior universes ?

Swiftly I shrivel at the thought of God,

At Nature and its wonders, Time and Space and Death,

But that I, turning, call to thee O soul, thou actual Me,

And lo, thou gently masterest the orbs,

Thou matest Time, smilest content at Death,

And fillest, swellest full the vastnesses of Space.

Greater than stars or suns,

Bounding O soul thou journeyest forth ;

What love than thine and ours could wider amplify ?

What aspirations, wishes, outvie thine and ours O soul ?

What dreams of the ideal ? what plans of purity, perfec-
tion, strength ?

What cheerful willingness for others' sake to give up all ?

For others' sake to suffer all ?

Reckoning ahead O soul, when thou, the time achiev'd,

The seas all cross'd, weather'd the capes, the voyage done,

Surrounded, copest, frontest God, yieldest, the aim attain'd,

As fill'd with friendship, love complete, the Elder Brother
found,

The Younger melts in fondness in his arms.

9

Passage to more than India !

Are thy wings plumed indeed for such far flights ?

O soul, voyageest thou indeed on voyages like those ?

Disportest thou on waters such as those ?
Soundest below the Sanscrit and the Vedas ?
Then have thy bent unleash'd.

Passage to you, your shores, ye aged fierce enigmas !
Passage to you, to mastership of you, ye strangling problems !

You, strew'd with the wrecks of skeletons, that, living,
never reach'd you.

Passage to more than India !
O secret of the earth and sky !
Of you O waters of the sea ! O winding creeks and rivers !
Of you O woods and fields ! of you strong mountains of
my land !

Of you O prairies ! of you gray rocks !
O morning red ! O clouds ! O rain and snows !
O day and night, passage to you !

O sun and moon and all you stars ! Sirius and Jupiter !
Passage to you !

Passage, immediate passage ! the blood burns in my veins !
Away O soul ! hoist instantly the anchor !
Cut the hawsers—haul out—shake out every sail !
Have we not stood here like trees in the ground long
enough ?
Have we not grovel'd here long enough, eating and drink-
ing like mere brutes ?
Have we not darken'd and dazed ourselves with books
long enough ?

Sail forth—steer for the deep waters only,
Reckless O soul, exploring, I with thee, and thou with me,
For we are bound where mariner has not yet dared to go,
And we will risk the ship, ourselves and all.

O my brave soul !
O farther farther sail !
O daring joy, but safe ! are they not all the seas of God ?
O farther, farther, farther sail !

PRAYER OF COLUMBUS

A BATTER'D, wreck'd old man,
Thrown on this savage shore, far, far from home,
Pent by the sea and dark rebellious brows, twelve dreary
months,
Sore, stiff with many toils, sicken'd and nigh to death,
I take my way along the island's edge,
Venting a heavy heart.

I am too full of woe !
Haply I may not live another day ;
I cannot rest O God, I cannot eat or drink or sleep,
Till I put forth myself, my prayer, once more to Thee,
Breathe, bathe myself once more in Thee, commune with
Thee,
Report myself once more to Thee.

Thou knowest my years entire, my life,
My long and crowded life of active work, not adoration
merely ;

Thou knowest the prayers and vigils of my youth,
Thou knowest my manhood's solemn and visionary medita-
tions,

Thou knowest how before I commenced I devoted all to
come to Thee,

Thou knowest I have in age ratified all those vows and
strictly kept them,

Thou knowest I have not once lost nor faith nor ecstasy in
Thee,

In shackles, prison'd, in disgrace, repining not,
Accepting all from Thee, as duly come from Thee,

All my emprises have been fill'd with Thee,
My speculations, plans, begun and carried on in thoughts
of Thee,

Sailing the deep or journeying the land for Thee ;
Intentions, purports, aspirations mine, leaving results to
Thee.

O I am sure they really came from Thee,
The urge, the ardor, the unconquerable will,
The potent, felt, interior command, stronger than words,
A message from the Heavens whispering to me even in
sleep,
These sped me on.

By me and these the work so far accomplish'd,
By me earth's elder cloy'd and stifled lands uncloy'd,
unloos'd,
By me the hemispheres rounded and tied, the unknown to
the known.

The end I know not, it is all in Thee,
Or small or great I know not—haply what broad fields,
what lands,
Haply the brutish measureless human undergrowth I know,
Transplanted there may rise to stature, knowledge worthy
Thee,
Haply the swords I know may there indeed be turn'd to
reaping-tools,
Haply the lifeless cross I know, Europe's dead cross, may
bud and blossom there.

One effort more, my altar this bleak sand ;
That Thou O God my life hast lighted,
With ray of light, steady, ineffable, vouchsafed of Thee,
Light rare untellable, lighting the very light,
Beyond all signs, descriptions, languages ;
For that O God, be it my latest word, here on my knees,
Old, poor, and paralyzed, I thank Thee.

My terminus near,
The clouds already closing in upon me,
The voyage balk'd, the course disputed, lost,
I yield my ships to Thee.

My hands, my limbs grow nerveless,
My brain feels rack'd, bewilder'd,

Let the old timbers part, I will not part,
I will cling fast to Thee, O God, though the waves buffet me,
Thee, Thee at least I know.

Is it the prophet's thought I speak, or am I raving?
What do I know of life? what of myself?
I know not even my own work past or present,
Dim ever-shifting guesses of it spread before me,
Of newer better worlds, their mighty parturition,
Mocking, perplexing me.

And these things I see suddenly, what mean they?
As if some miracle, some hand divine unseal'd my eyes,
Shadowy vast shapes smile through the air and sky,
And on the distant waves sail countless ships,
And anthems in new tongues I hear saluting me.

THE SLEEPERS

1

I WANDER all night in my vision,
Stepping with light feet, swiftly and noiselessly stepping
and stopping,

Bending with open eyes over the shut eyes of sleepers,
Wandering and confused, lost to myself, ill-assorted, con-
tradictory,

Pausing, gazing, bending, and stopping.

How solemn they look there, stretch'd and still,
How quiet they breathe, the little children in their cradles.

The wretched features of ennuyés, the white features of
corpses, the livid faces of drunkards, the sick-gray
faces of onanists,

The gash'd bodies on battle-fields, the insane in their strong-
door'd rooms, the sacred idiots, the new-born emerging
from gates, and the dying emerging from gates,

The night pervades them and infolds them.

The married couple sleep calmly in their bed, he with his
palm on the hip of the wife, and she with her palm on
the hip of the husband,

The sisters sleep lovingly side by side in their bed,
The men sleep lovingly side by side in theirs,
And the mother sleeps with her little child carefully wrapt.

The blind sleep, and the deaf and dumb sleep,
The prisoner sleeps well in the prison, the runaway son
sleeps,

The murderer that is to be hung next day, how does he
sleep ?

And the murder'd person, how does he sleep ?

The female that loves unrequited sleeps,
And the male that loves unrequited sleeps,

The head of the money-maker that plotted all day sleeps,
And the enraged and treacherous dispositions, all, all sleep.

I stand in the dark with drooping eyes by the worst-suffering
and the most restless,
I pass my hands soothingly to and fro a few inches from
them,
The restless sink in their beds, they fitfully sleep.

Now I pierce the darkness, new beings appear,
The earth recedes from me into the night,
I saw that it was beautiful, and I see that what is not the
earth is beautiful.

I go from bedside to bedside, I sleep close with the other
sleepers each in turn,
I dream in my dream all the dreams of the other dreamers,
And I become the other dreamers.

I am a dance—play up there! the fit is whirling me fast!

I am the ever-laughing—it is new moon and twilight,
I see the hiding of douceurs, I see nimble ghosts which-
ever way I look,
Cache and cache again deep in the ground and sea, and
where it is neither ground nor sea.

Well do they do their jobs those journeymen divine,
Only from me can they hide nothing, and would not if they
could,

I reckon I am their boss and they make me a pet besides,
And surround me and lead me and run ahead when I walk,
To lift their cunning covers to signify me with stretch'd
arms, and resume the way;

Onward we move, a gay gang of blackguards! with mirth-
shouting music and wild-flapping pennants of joy!

I am the actor, the actress, the voter, the politician,
The emigrant and the exile, the criminal that stood in the
box,

He who has been famous and he who shall be famous after
to-day,

The stammerer, the well-form'd person, the wasted or feeble person.

I am she who adorn'd herself and folded her hair expectantly,

My truant lover has come, and it is dark.

Double yourself and receive me darkness,

Receive me and my lover too, he will not let me go without him.

I roll myself upon you as upon a bed, I resign myself to the dusk.

He whom I call answers me and takes the place of my lover,
He rises with me silently from the bed.

Darkness, you are gentler than my lover, his flesh was sweaty and panting,

I feel the hot moisture yet that he left me.

My hands are spread forth, I pass them in all directions,
I would sound up the shadowy shore to which you are journeying.

Be careful darkness! already what was it touch'd me?

I thought my lover had gone, else darkness and he are one,
I hear the heart-beat, I follow, I fade away.

2

I descend my western course, my sinews are flaccid,
Perfume and youth course through me and I am their wake.

It is my face yellow and wrinkled instead of the old woman's,
I sit low in a straw-bottom chair and carefully darn my grandson's stockings.

It is I too, the sleepless widow looking out on the winter midnight,

I see the sparkles of starshine on the icy and pallid earth.

A shroud I see and I am the shroud, I wrap a body and lie in the coffin,

It is dark here under ground, it is not evil or pain here,
it is blank here, for reasons.

(It seems to me that every thing in the light and air ought
to be happy,
Whoever is not in his coffin and the dark grave let him
know he has enough.)

3

I see a beautiful gigantic swimmer swimming naked through
the eddies of the sea,
His brown hair lies close and even to his head, he strikes
out with courageous arms, he urges himself with his
legs,
I see his white body, I see his undaunted eyes,
I hate the swift-running eddies that would dash him head-
foremost on the rocks.

What are you doing you ruffianly red-trickled waves ?
Will you kill the courageous giant ? will you kill him in
the prime of his middle age ?

Steady and long he struggles,
He is baffled, bang'd, bruis'd, he holds out while his strength
holds out,
The slapping eddies are spotted with his blood, they bear
him away, they roll him, swing him, turn him,
His beautiful body is borne in the circling eddies, it is con-
tinually bruis'd on rocks,
Swiftly and out of sight is borne the brave corpse.

4

I turn but do not extricate myself,
Confused, a past-reading, another, but with darkness yet.

The beach is cut by the razory ice-wind, the wreck-guns
sound,
The tempest lulls, the moon comes floundering through
the drifts.

I look where the ship helplessly heads end on, I hear the
burst as she strikes, I hear the howls of dismay, they
grow fainter and fainter.

I cannot aid with my wringing fingers,
I can but rush to the surf and let it drench me and freeze
upon me.

I search with the crowd, not one of the company is wash'd
to us alive,
In the morning I help pick up the dead and lay them in
rows in a barn.

5

Now of the older war-days, the defeat at Brooklyn,
Washington stands inside the lines, he stands on the
intrench'd hills amid a crowd of officers.
His face is cold and damp, he cannot repress the weeping
drops,
He lifts the glass perpetually to his eyes, the color is blanch'd
from his cheeks,
He sees the slaughter of the southern braves confided to him
by their parents.

The same at last and at last when peace is declared,
He stands in the room of the old tavern, the well-belov'd
soldiers all pass through,
The officers speechless and slow draw near in their turns,
The chief encircles their necks with his arm and kisses them
on the cheek,
He kisses lightly the wet cheeks one after another, he
shakes hands and bids good-by to the army.

6

Now what my mother told me one day as we sat at dinner
together,
Of when she was a nearly grown girl living home with her
parents on the old homestead.

A red squaw came one breakfast-time to the old homestead,
On her back she carried a bundle of rushes for rush-bottom-
ing chairs,
Her hair, straight, shiny, coarse, black, profuse, half-
envelop'd her face,
Her step was free and elastic, and her voice sounded
exquisitely as she spoke.

My mother look'd in delight and amazement at the stranger,
She look'd at the freshness of her tall-borne face and full
and pliant limbs,
The more she look'd upon her she loved her,

Never before had she seen such wonderful beauty and
purity,

She made her sit on a bench by the jamb of the fireplace,
she cook'd food for her,

She had no work to give her, but she gave her remembrance
and fondness.

The red squaw staid all the forenoon, and toward the middle
of the afternoon she went away,

O my mother was loth to have her go away,

All the week she thought of her, she watch'd for her many a
month,

She remember'd her many a winter and many a summer,

But the red squaw never came nor was heard of there
again.

7

A show of the summer softness—a contact of something
unseen—an amour of the light and air,

I am jealous and overwhelm'd with friendliness,

And will go gallivant with the light and air myself.

O love and summer, you are in the dreams and in me,

Autumn and winter are in the dreams, the farmer goes with
his thrift,

The droves and crops increase, the barns are well-fill'd.

Elements merge in the night, ships make tacks in the
dreams,

The sailor sails, the exile returns home,

The fugitive returns unharm'd, the immigrant is back
beyond months and years,

The poor Irishman lives in the simple house of his child-
hood with the well-known neighbors and faces,

They warmly welcome him, he is barefoot again, he forgets
he is well off,

The Dutchman voyages home, and the Scotchman and
Welshman voyage home, and the native of the Mediter-
ranean voyages home,

To every port of England, France, Spain, enter well-fill'd
ships,

The Swiss foots it towards his hills, the Prussian goes his
way, the Hungarian his way, and the Pole his way,

The Swede returns, and the Dane and Norwegian return.

The homeward bound and the outward bound,
The beautiful lost swimmer, the ennuyé, the onanist, the
female that loves unrequited, the money-maker,
The actor and actress, those through with their parts and
those waiting to commence,
The affectionate boy, the husband and wife, the voter, the
nominee that is chosen and the nominee that has fail'd,
The great already known and the great any time after
to-day,

The stammerer, the sick, the perfect-form'd, the homely,
The criminal that stood in the box, the judge that sat and
sentenced him, the fluent lawyers, the jury, the
audience,

The laughter and weeper, the dancer, the midnight widow,
the red squaw,

The consumptive, the erysipalite, the idiot, he that is
wrong'd,

The antipodes, and every one between this and them in the
dark,

I swear they are averaged now—one is no better than the
other,

The night and sleep have liken'd them and restored them.

I swear they are all beautiful,

Every one that sleeps is beautiful, everything in the dim
light is beautiful,

The wildest and bloodiest is over, and all is peace.

Peace is always beautiful,

The myth of heaven indicates peace and night.

The myth of heaven indicates the soul,

The soul is always beautiful, it appears more or it appears
less, it comes or it lags behind,

It comes from its embower'd garden and looks pleasantly
on itself and encloses the world,

Perfect and clean the genitals previously jetting, and
perfect and clean the womb cohering,

The head well-grown proportion'd and plumb, and the
bowels and joints proportion'd and plumb.

The soul is always beautiful,

The universe is duly in order, every thing is in its place,

What has arrived is in its place and what waits shall be in
its place,
The twisted skull waits, the watery or rotten blood
waits,
The child of the glutton or venerealee waits long, and the
child of the drunkard waits long, and the drunkard
himself waits long,
The sleepers that lived and died wait, the far advanced are
to go on in their turns, and the far behind are to come
on in their turns,
The diverse shall be no less diverse, but they shall flow and
unite—they unite now.

8

The sleepers are very beautiful as they lie unclothed,
They flow hand in hand over the whole earth from east to
west as they lie unclothed,
The Asiatic and African are hand in hand, the European
and American are hand in hand,
Learn'd and unlearn'd are hand in hand, and male and
female are hand in hand,
The bare arm of the girl crosses the bare breast of her lover,
they press close without lust, his lips press her neck,
The father holds his grown or ungrown son in his arms with
measureless love, and the son holds the father in his
arms with measureless love,
The white hair of the mother shines on the white wrist of
the daughter,
The breath of the boy goes with the breath of the man,
friend is inarm'd by friend,
The scholar kisses the teacher and the teacher kisses the
scholar, the wrong'd is made right,
The call of the slave is one with the master's call, and the
master salutes the slave,
The felon steps forth from the prison, the insane becomes
sane, the suffering of sick persons is reliev'd,
The sweatings and fevers stop, the throat that was unsound
is sound, the lungs of the consumptive are resumed,
the poor distress'd head is free,
The joints of the rheumatic move as smoothly as ever, and
smoother than ever,
Stiflings and passages open, the paralyzed become supple,

The swell'd and convuls'd and congested awake to themselves in condition,

They pass the invigoration of the night and the chemistry of the night, and awake.

I too pass from the night,

I stay a while away O night, but I return to you again and love you.

Why should I be afraid to trust myself to you ?

I am not afraid, I have been well brought forward by you,

I love the rich running day, but I do not desert her in whom I lay so long,

I know not how I came of you and I know not where I go with you, but I know I came well and shall go well.

I will stop only a time with the night, and rise betimes,

I will duly pass the day O my mother, and duly return to you.

TRANSPOSITIONS

LET the reformers descend from the stands where they are forever bawling—let an idiot or insane person appear on each of the stands ;

Let judges and criminals be transposed—let the prison-keepers be put in prison—let those that were prisoners take the keys ;

Let them that distrust birth and death lead the rest.

TO THINK OF TIME

1

To think of time—of all that retrospection,
To think of to-day, and the ages continued henceforward.

Have you guess'd you yourself would not continue ?

Have you dreaded these earth-beetles ?

Have you fear'd the future would be nothing to you ?

Is to-day nothing ? is the beginningless past nothing ?

If the future is nothing they are just as surely nothing.

To think that the sun rose in the east—that men and women
were flexible, real, alive—that everything was alive,

To think that you and I did not see, feel, think, nor bear our
part,

To think that we are now here and bear our part.

2

Not a day passes, not a minute or second without an
accouchement,

Not a day passes, not a minute or second without a corpse.

The dull nights go over and the dull days also,

The soreness of lying so much in bed goes over,

The physician after long putting off gives the silent and
terrible look for an answer,

The children come hurried and weeping, and the brothers
and sisters are sent for,

Medicines stand unused on the shelf, (the camphor-smell
has long pervaded the rooms,)

The faithful hand of the living does not desert the hand of
the dying,

The twitching lips press lightly on the forehead of the dying,

The breath ceases and the pulse of the heart ceases,

The corpse stretches on the bed and the living look
upon it,
It is palpable as the living are palpable.

The living look upon the corpse with their eyesight,
But without eyesight lingers a different living and looks
curiously on the corpse.

3

To think the thought of death merged in the thought of
materials,

To think of all these wonders of city and country, and others
taking great interest in them, and we taking no interest
in them.

To think how eager we are in building our houses,
To think others shall be just as eager, and we quite in-
different.

(I see one building the house that serves him a few years,
or seventy or eighty years at most,
I see one building the house that serves him longer than
that.)

Slow-moving and black lines creep over the whole earth—
they never cease—they are the burial lines,
He that was President was buried, and he that is now
President shall surely be buried.

4

A reminiscence of the vulgar fate,
A frequent sample of the life and death of workmen,
Each after his kind.

Cold dash of waves at the ferry-wharf, posh and ice in the
river, half-frozen mud in the streets,

A gray discouraged sky overhead, the short last daylight
of December,

A hearse and stages, the funeral of an old Broadway stage-
driver, the cortege mostly drivers.

Steady the trot to the cemetery, duly rattles the death-
bell,

The gate is pass'd, the new-dug grave is halted at, the living
alight, the hearse uncloses,

The coffin is pass'd out, lower'd and settled, the whip is
laid on the coffin, the earth is swiftly shovel'd in,
The mound above is flatted with the spades—silence,
A minute—no one moves or speaks—it is done,
He is decently put away—is there anything more?

He was a good fellow, free-mouth'd, quick-temper'd, not
bad-looking,
Ready with life or death for a friend, fond of women,
gambled, ate hearty, drank hearty,
Had known what it was to be flush, grew low-spirited
toward the last, sicken'd, was help'd by a contribution,
Died, aged forty-one years—and that was his funeral.

Thumb extended, finger uplifted, apron, cape, gloves,
strap, wet-weather clothes, whip carefully chosen,
Boss, spotter, starter, hostler, somebody loafing on you,
you loafing on somebody, headway, man before and
man behind,
Good day's work, bad day's work, pet stock, mean stock,
first out, last out, turning-in at night,
To think that these are so much and so nigh to other drivers,
and he there takes no interest in them.

5

The markets, the government, the working-man's wages, to
think what account they are through our nights and
days,
To think that other working-men will make just as great
account of them, yet we make little or no account.

The vulgar and the refined, what you call sin and what you
call goodness, to think how wide a difference,
To think the difference will still continue to others, yet
we lie beyond the difference.

To think how much pleasure there is,
Do you enjoy yourself in the city? or engaged in business?
or planning a nomination and election? or with your
wife and family?

Or with your mother and sisters? or in womanly house-
work? or the beautiful maternal cares?

These also flow onward to others, you and I flow onward,
But in due time you and I shall take less interest in them.

Your farm, profits, crops—to think how engross'd you are,
To think there will still be farms, profits, crops, yet for you
of what avail?

6

What will be will be well, for what is is well,
To take interest is well, and not to take interest shall be
well.

The domestic joys, the daily housework or business, the
building of houses, are not phantasms, they have
weight, form, location,
Farms, profits, crops, markets, wages, government, are
none of them phantasms,
The difference between sin and goodness is no delusion,
The earth is not an echo, man and his life and all the things
of his life are well-consider'd.

You are not thrown to the winds, you gather certainly and
safely around yourself,
Yourself! yourself! yourself, for ever and ever!

7

It is not to diffuse you that you were born of your mother
and father, it is to identify you,
It is not that you should be undecided, but that you should
be decided,
Something long preparing and formless is arrived and
form'd in you,
You are henceforth secure, whatever comes or goes.

The threads that were spun are gather'd, the weft crosses
the warp, the pattern is systematic.

The preparations have every one been justified,
The orchestra have sufficiently tuned their instruments,
the baton has given the signal.

The guest that was coming, he waited long, he is now
housed,

He is one of those who are beautiful and happy, he is one of those that to look upon and be with is enough.

The law of the past cannot be eluded,
The law of the present and future cannot be eluded,
The law of the living cannot be eluded, it is eternal,
The law of promotion and transformation cannot be eluded,
The law of heroes and good-doers cannot be eluded,
The law of drunkards, informers, mean persons, not one iota thereof can be eluded.

8

Slow moving and black lines go ceaselessly over the earth,
Northerner goes carried and Southerner goes carried, and
they on the Atlantic side and they on the Pacific,
And they between, and all through the Mississippi country,
and all over the earth.

The great masters and kosmos are well as they go, the
heroes and good-doers are well,
The known leaders and inventors and the rich owners and
pious and distinguish'd may be well,
But there is more account than that, there is strict account
of all.

The interminable hordes of the ignorant and wicked are
not nothing,
The barbarians of Africa and Asia are not nothing,
The perpetual successions of shallow people are not nothing
as they go.

Of and in all these things,
I have dream'd that we are not to be changed so much, nor
the law of us changed,
I have dream'd that heroes and good-doers shall be under
the present and past law,
And that murderers, drunkards, liars, shall be under the
present and past law,
For I have dream'd that the law they are under now is
enough.

And I have dream'd that the purpose and essence of the
known life, the transient,

Is to form and decide identity for the unknown life, the permanent.

If all came but to ashes of dung,
If maggots and rats ended us, then Alarum ! for we are
betray'd,
Then indeed suspicion of death.

Do you suspect death ? if I were to suspect death I should
die now,

Do you think I could walk pleasantly and well-suited
toward annihilation ?

Pleasantly and well-suited I walk,
Whither I walk I cannot define, but I know it is good,
The whole universe indicates that it is good,
The past and the present indicate that it is good.

How beautiful and perfect are the animals !
How perfect the earth, and the minutest thing upon it !
What is called good is perfect, and what is called bad is
just as perfect,
The vegetables and minerals are all perfect, and the im-
ponderable fluids perfect ;
Slowly and surely they have pass'd on to this, and slowly
and surely they yet pass on.

9

I swear I think now that everything without exception has
an eternal soul !

The trees have, rooted in the ground ! the weeds of the
sea have ! the animals !

I swear I think there is nothing but immortality !
That the exquisite scheme is for it, and the nebulous float
is for it, and the cohering is for it !
And all preparation is for it—and identity is for it—and
life and materials are altogether for it !

WHISPERS OF HEAVENLY DEATH

DAREST THOU NOW O SOUL

DAREST thou now O soul,
Walk out with me toward the unknown region,
Where neither ground is for the feet nor any path to follow ?

No map there, nor guide,
Nor voice sounding, nor touch of human hand,
Nor face with blooming flesh, nor lips, nor eyes, are in that
land.

I know it not O soul,
Nor dost thou, all is a blank before us,
All waits undream'd of in that region, that inaccessible
land.

Till when the ties loosen,
All but the ties eternal, Time and Space,
Nor darkness, gravitation, sense, nor any bounds bounding
us.

Then we burst forth, we float,
In Time and Space O soul, prepared for them,
Equal, equipt at last, (O joy ! O fruit of all !) them to
fulfil O soul.

WHISPERS OF HEAVENLY DEATH

WHISPERS of heavenly death murmur'd I hear,
Labial gossip of night, sibilant chorals,
Footsteps gently ascending, mystical breezes wafted soft
and low,

Ripples of unseen rivers, tides of a current flowing, forever
 flowing,
 (Or is it the plashing of tears? the measureless waters of
 human tears?)

I see, just see skyward, great cloud-masses,
 Mournfully slowly they roll, silently swelling and mixing,
 With at times a half-dimm'd sadden'd far-off star,
 Appearing and disappearing.

(Some parturition rather, some solemn immortal birth;
 On the frontiers to eyes impenetrable,
 Some soul is passing over.)

CHANTING THE SQUARE DEIFIC

1

CHANTING the square deific, out of the One advancing,
 out of the sides,
 Out of the old and new, out of the square entirely divine,
 Solid, four-sided, (all the sides needed,) from this side
 Jehovah am I,
 Old Brahm I, and I Saturnius am;
 Not Time affects me—I am Time, old, modern as any,
 Unpersuadable, relentless, executing righteous judgments,
 As the Earth, the Father, the brown old Kronos, with laws,
 Aged beyond computation, yet ever new, ever with those
 mighty laws rolling,
 Relentless I forgive no man—whoever sins dies—I will
 have that man's life;
 Therefore let none expect mercy—have the seasons, gravita-
 tion, the appointed days, mercy? no more have I,
 But as the seasons and gravitation, and as all the appointed
 days that forgive not,
 I dispense from this side judgments inexorable without the
 least remorse.

2

Consolator most mild, the promis'd one advancing,
 With gentle hand extended, the mightier God am I,
 Foretold by prophets and poets in their most rapt pro-
 phecies and poems,

From this side, lo ! the Lord Christ gazes—lo ! Hermes I
 —lo ! mine is Hercules' face,
 All sorrow, labor, suffering, I, tallying it, absorb in myself,
 Many times have I been rejected, taunted, put in prison,
 and crucified, and many times shall be again,
 All the world have I given up for my dear brothers' and
 sisters' sake, for the soul's sake,
 Wending my way through the homes of men, rich or poor,
 with the kiss of affection,
 For I am affection, I am the cheer-bringing God, with hope
 and all-enclosing charity,
 With indulgent words as to children, with fresh and sane
 words, mine only,
 Young and strong I pass knowing well I am destin'd myself
 to an early death ;
 But my charity has no death—my wisdom dies not, neither
 early nor late,
 And my sweet love bequeath'd here and elsewhere never
 dies.

3

Aloof, dissatisfied, plotting revolt,
 Comrade of criminals, brother of slaves,
 Crafty, despised, a drudge, ignorant,
 With sudra face and worn brow, black, but in the depths
 of my heart, proud as any,
 Lifted now and always against whoever scorning assumes
 to rule me,
 Morose, full of guile, full of reminiscences, brooding, with
 many wiles,
 (Though it was thought I was baffled and dispel'd, and my
 wiles done, but that will never be,)
 Defiant, I, Satan, still live, still utter words, in new lands
 duly appearing, (and old ones also,)
 Permanent here from my side, warlike, equal with any, real
 as any,
 Nor time nor change shall ever change me or my words.

4

Santa Spirita, breather, life,
 Beyond the light, lighter than light,
 Beyond the flames of hell, joyous, leaping easily above hell,
 Beyond Paradise, perfumed solely with mine own per-
 fume,

Including all life on earth, touching, including God, including
Saviour and Satan,
Ethereal, pervading all, (for without me what were all ?
what were God ?)
Essence of forms, life of the real identities, permanent,
positive, (namely the unseen,)
Life of the great round world, the sun and stars, and of man,
I, the general soul,
Here the square finishing, the solid, I the most solid,
Breathe my breath also through these songs.

OF HIM I LOVE DAY AND NIGHT

OF him I love day and night I dream'd I heard he was
dead,
And I dream'd I went where they had buried him I love, but
he was not in that place,
And I dream'd I wander'd searching among burial-places
to find him,
And I found that every place was a burial-place ;
The houses full of life were equally full of death, (this
house is now,)
The streets, the shipping, the places of amusement, the
Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia, the Mannahatta, were
as full of the dead as of the living,
And fuller, O vastly fuller of the dead than of the living ;
And what I dream'd I will henceforth tell to every person
and age,
And I stand henceforth bound to what I dream'd,
And now I am willing to disregard burial-places and dis-
pense with them,
And if the memorials of the dead were put up indifferently
everywhere, even in the room where I eat or sleep, I
should be satisfied,
And if the corpse of any one I love, or if my own corpse,
be duly render'd to powder and pour'd in the sea, I
shall be satisfied,
Or if it be distributed to the winds I shall be satisfied.

YET, YET, YE DOWNCAST HOURS

YET, yet, ye downcast hours, I know ye also,
 Weights of lead, how ye clog and cling at my ankles,
 Earth to a chamber of mourning turns—I hear the o'er-
 weening, mocking voice,
*Matter is conqueror—matter, triumphant only, continues
 onward.*

Despairing cries float ceaselessly toward me,
 The call of my nearest lover, putting forth, alarm'd, uncer-
 tain,
*The sea I am quickly to sail, come tell me,
 Come tell me where I am speeding, tell me my destination.*

I understand your anguish, but I cannot help you,
 I approach, hear, behold, the sad mouth, the look out of
 the eyes, your mute inquiry,
Whither I go from the bed I recline on, come tell me ;
 Old age, alarm'd, uncertain—a young woman's voice, appeal-
 ing to me for comfort ;
 A young man's voice, *Shall I not escape ?*

AS IF A PHANTOM CARESS'D ME

As if a phantom caress'd me,
 I thought I was not alone walking here by the shore ;
 But the one I thought was with me as now I walk by the
 shore, the one I loved that caress'd me,
 As I lean and look through the glimmering light, that one
 has utterly disappear'd,
 And those appear that are hateful to me and mock me.

ASSURANCES

I NEED no assurances, I am a man who is pre-occupied of
 his own soul ;
 I do not doubt that from under the feet and beside the hands
 and face I am cognizant of, are now looking faces I am
 not cognizant of, calm and actual faces,

I do not doubt but the majesty and beauty of the world are
latent in any iota of the world,

I do not doubt I am limitless, and that the universes are
limitless, in vain I try to think how limitless,

I do not doubt that the orbs and the systems of orbs play
their swift sports through the air on purpose, and that
I shall one day be eligible to do as much as they, and
more than they,

I do not doubt that temporary affairs keep on and on
millions of years,

I do not doubt interiors have their interiors, and exteriors
have their exteriors, and that the eyesight has another
eyesight, and the hearing another hearing, and the
voice another voice,

I do not doubt that the passionately-wept deaths of young
men are provided for, and that the deaths of young
women and the deaths of little children are provided
for,

(Did you think Life was so well provided for, and Death,
the purport of all Life, is not well provided for ?)

I do not doubt that wrecks at sea, no matter what the
horrors of them, no matter whose wife, child, husband,
father, lover, has gone down, are provided for, to the
minutest points,

I do not doubt that whatever can possibly happen any-
where at any time, is provided for in the inherences
of things,

I do not think Life provides for all and for Time and Space,
but I believe Heavenly Death provides for all.

QUICKSAND YEARS

QUICKSAND years that whirl me I know not whither,
Your schemes, politics, fail, lines give way, substances
mock and elude me,

Only the theme I sing, the great and strong-possess'd soul,
eludes not,

One's-self must never give way—that is the final substance
—that out of all is sure,

Out of politics, triumphs, battles, life, what at last finally
remains ?

When shows break up what but One's-Self is sure ?

THAT MUSIC ALWAYS ROUND ME

THAT music always round me, unceasing, unbeginning,
 yet long untaught I did not hear,
 But now the chorus I hear and am elated,
 A tenor, strong, ascending with power and health, with
 glad notes of daybreak I hear,
 A soprano at intervals sailing buoyantly over the tops of
 immense waves,
 A transparent base shuddering lusciously under and through
 the universe,
 The triumphant tutti, the funeral wailings with sweet
 flutes and violins, all these I fill myself with,
 I hear not the volumes of sound merely, I am moved by
 the exquisite meanings,
 I listen to the different voices winding in and out, striving,
 contending with fiery vehemence to excel each other
 in emotion ;
 I do not think the performers know themselves—but now
 I think I begin to know them

WHAT SHIP PUZZLED AT SEA

WHAT ship puzzled at sea, cons for the true reckoning ?
 Or coming in, to avoid the bars and follow the channel a
 perfect pilot needs ?
 Here, sailor ! here, ship ! take aboard the most perfect
 pilot,
 Whom, in a little boat, putting off and rowing, I hailing
 you offer.

A NOISELESS PATIENT SPIDER

A NOISELESS patient spider,
 I mark'd where on a little promontory it stood isolated,
 Mark'd how to explore the vacant vast surrounding,
 It launch'd forth filament, filament, filament, out of itself,
 Ever unreeling them, ever tirelessly speeding them.

And you O my soul where you stand,
Surrounded, detached, in measureless oceans of space,
Ceaselessly musing, venturing, throwing, seeking the spheres
to connect them,
Till the bridge you will need be form'd, till the ductile
anchor hold,
Till the gossamer thread you fling catch somewhere, O
my soul.

O LIVING ALWAYS, ALWAYS DYING

O LIVING always, always dying !
O the burials of me past and present,
O me while I stride ahead, material, visible, imperious as
ever ;
O me, what I was for years, now dead, (I lament not, I am
content ;)
O to disengage myself from those corpses of me, which I
turn and look at where I cast them,
To pass on, (O living ! always living !) and leave the corpses
behind.

TO ONE SHORTLY TO DIE

From all the rest I single out you, having a message for you,
You are to die—let others tell you what they please, I
cannot prevaricate,
I am exact and merciless, but I love you—there is no escape
for you.

Softly I lay my right hand upon you, you just feel it,
I do not argue, I bend my head close and half envelop it,
I sit quietly by, I remain faithful,
I am more than nurse, more than parent or neighbor,
I absolve you from all except yourself spiritual bodily, that
is eternal, you yourself will surely escape,
The corpse you will leave will be but excrementitious.

The sun bursts through in unlooked-for directions,
Strong thoughts fill you and confidence, you smile,
You forget you are sick, as I forget you are sick,

You do not see the medicines, you do not mind the weeping
 friends, I am with you,
 I exclude others from you, there is nothing to be com-
 miserated,
 I do not commiserate, I congratulate you.

NIGHT ON THE PRAIRIES

NIGHT on the prairies,
 The supper is over, the fire on the ground burns low,
 The wearied emigrants sleep, wrapt in their blankets ;
 I walk by myself—I stand and look at the stars, which I
 think now I never realized before.

Now I absorb immortality and peace,
 I admire death and test propositions.

How plenteous ! how spiritual ! how resumé !
 The same old man and soul—the same old aspirations, and
 the same content.

I was thinking the day most splendid till I saw what the
 not-day exhibited,
 I was thinking this globe enough till there sprang out so
 noiseless around me myriads of other globes.

Now while the great thoughts of space and eternity fill me
 I will measure myself by them,
 And now touch'd with the lives of other globes arrived as
 far along as those of the earth,
 Or waiting to arrive, or pass'd on farther than those of the
 earth,
 I henceforth no more ignore them than I ignore my own
 life,
 Or the lives of the earth arrived as far as mine, or waiting
 to arrive.

O I see now that life cannot exhibit all to me, as the day
 cannot,
 I see that I am to wait for what will be exhibited by death.

THOUGHT

As I sit with others at a great feast, suddenly while the
music is playing,
To my mind, (whence it comes I know not,) spectral in
mist of a wreck at sea,
Of certain ships, how they sail from port with flying
streamers and wafted kisses, and that is the last of
them,
Of the solemn and murky mystery about the fate of the
President,
Of the flower of the marine science of fifty generations
founder'd off the Northeast coast and going down—of
the steamship Arctic going down,
Of the veil'd tableau—women gather'd together on deck,
pale, heroic, waiting the moment that draws so close
—O the moment!
A huge sob—a few bubbles—the white foam spirting up—
and then the women gone,
Sinking there while the passionless wet flows on—and I
now pondering, Are those women indeed gone?
Are souls drown'd and destroy'd so?
Is only matter triumphant?

THE LAST INVOCATION

At the last, tenderly,
From the walls of the powerful fortress'd house,
From the clasp of the knitted locks, from the keep of the
well-closed doors,
Let me be wafted.
Let me glide noiselessly forth;
With the key of softness unlock the locks—with a whisper,
Set ope the doors O soul.

Tenderly—be not impatient,
(Strong is your hold O mortal flesh,
Strong is your hold O love.)

AS I WATCH'D THE PLOUGHMAN PLOUGHING

As I watch'd the ploughman ploughing,
Or the sower sowing in the fields, or the harvester har-
vesting,
I saw there too, O life and death, your analogies ;
(Life, life is the tillage, and Death is the harvest according.)

PENSIVE AND FALTERING

PENSIVE and faltering,
The words *the Dead* I write,
For living are the Dead,
(Haply the only living, only real,
And I the apparition, I the spectre.)

THOU MOTHER WITH THY EQUAL BROOD

1

Thou Mother with thy equal brood,
Thou varied chain of different States, yet one identity only,
A special song before I go I'd sing o'er all the rest,
For thee, the future.

I'd sow a seed for thee of endless Nationality,
I'd fashion thy ensemble including body and soul,
I'd show away ahead thy real Union, and how it may be
accomplish'd.

The paths to the house I seek to make,
But leave to those to come the house itself.

Belief I sing, and preparation ;
As Life and Nature are not great with reference to the
present only,
But greater still from what is yet to come,
Out of that formula for thee I sing.

2

As a strong bird on pinions free,
Joyous, the amplest spaces heavenward cleaving,
Such be the thought I'd think of thee America,
Such be the recitative I'd bring for thee.

The conceits of the poets of other lands I'd bring thee not,
Nor the compliments that have served their turn so long,
Nor rhyme, nor the classics, nor perfume of foreign court
or indoor library ;
But an odor I'd bring as from forests of pine in Maine, or
breath of an Illinois prairie,
With open airs of Virginia or Georgia or Tennessee, or from
Texas uplands, or Florida's glades,

Or the Saguenay's black stream, or the wide blue spread of
Huron,

With presentment of Yellowstone's scenes, or Yosemite,
And murmuring under, pervading all, I'd bring the rustling
sea-sound,

That endlessly sounds from the two Great Seas of the world.

And for thy subtler sense subtler refrains dread Mother,
Preludes of intellect tallying these and thee, mind-formulas
fitted for thee, real and sane and large as these and
thee,

Thou! mounting higher, diving deeper than we knew,
thou transcendental Union!

By thee fact to be justified, blended with thought,

Thought of man justified, blended with God,

Through thy idea, lo, the immortal reality!

Through thy reality, lo, the immortal idea!

3

Brain of the New World, what a task is thine,

To formulate the Modern—out of the peerless grandeur of
the modern,

Out of thyself, comprising science, to recast poems,
churches, art,

(Recast, may-be discard them, end them—may-be their
work is done, who knows?)

By vision, hand, conception, on the background of the
mighty past, the dead,

To limn with absolute faith the mighty living present.

And yet thou living present brain, heir of the dead, the Old
World brain,

Thou that lay folded like an unborn babe within its folds
so long,

Thou carefully prepared by it so long—haply thou but
unfoldest it, only maturest it,

It to eventuate in thee—the essence of the by-gone time
contain'd in thee,

Its poems, churches, arts, unwitting to themselves, destined
with reference to thee;

Thou but the apples, long, long, long a-growing,

The fruit of all the Old ripening to-day in thee.

4

Sail, sail thy best, ship of Democracy,
 Of value is thy freight, 'tis not the Present only,
 The Past is also stored in thee,
 Thou holdest not the venture of thyself alone, not of the
 Western continent alone,
 Earth's *résumé* entire floats on thy keel O ship, is steadied
 by thy spars,
 With thee Time voyages in trust, the antecedent nations
 sink or swim with thee,
 With all their ancient struggles, martyrs, heroes, epics, wars,
 thou bear'st the other continents,
 Theirs, theirs as much as thine, the destination-port
 triumphant ;
 Steer then with good strong hand and wary eye O helmsman,
 thou carriest great companions,
 Venerable priestly Asia sails this day with thee,
 And royal feudal Europe sails with thee.

5

Beautiful world of new superber birth that rises to my
 eyes,
 Like a limitless golden cloud filling the western sky,
 Emblem of general maternity lifted above all,
 Sacred shape of the bearer of daughters and sons,
 Out of thy teeming womb thy giant babes in ceaseless
 procession issuing,
 Acceding from such gestation, taking and giving continual
 strength and life,
 World of the real—world of the twain in one,
 World of the soul, born by the world of the real alone, led
 to identity, body, by it alone,
 Yet in beginning only, incalculable masses of composite
 precious materials,
 By history's cycles forwarded, by every nation, language,
 hither sent,
 Ready, collected here, a freer, vast, electric world, to be
 constructed here,
 (The true New World, the world of orbic science, morals,
 literatures to come,)
 Thou wonder world yet undefined, uniform'd, neither do I
 define thee,

How can I pierce the impenetrable blank of the future ?
 I feel thy ominous greatness evil as well as good,
 I watch thee advancing, absorbing the present, transcending
 the past,
 I see thy light lighting, and thy shadow shadowing, as if
 the entire globe,
 But I do not undertake to define thee, hardly to compre-
 hend thee,
 I but thee name, thee prophesy, as now,
 I merely thee ejaculate !

Thee in thy future,
 Thee in thy only permanent life, career, thy own unloosen'd
 mind, thy soaring spirit,
 Thee as another equally needed sun, radiant, ablaze, swift-
 moving, fructifying all,
 Thee risen in potent cheerfulness and joy, in endless great
 hilarity,
 Scattering for good the cloud that hung so long, that
 weigh'd so long upon the mind of man,
 The doubt, suspicion, dread, of gradual, certain decadence
 of man ;
 Thee in thy larger, saner brood of female, male—thee in thy
 athletes, moral, spiritual, South, North, West, East,
 (To thy immortal breasts, Mother of All, thy every daughter,
 son, endear'd alike, forever equal,)
 Thee in thy own musicians, singers, artists, unborn yet,
 but certain,
 Thee in thy moral wealth and civilization, (until which
 thy proudest material civilization must remain in
 vain,)
 Thee in thy all-supplying, all-enclosing worship—thee in
 no single bible, saviour, merely,
 Thy saviours countless, latent within thyself, thy bibles
 incessant within thyself, equal to any, divine as any,
 (Thy soaring course thee formulating, not in thy two great
 wars, nor in thy century's visible growth,
 But far more in these leaves and chants, thy chants, great
 Mother !)
 Thee in an education grown of thee, in teachers, studies,
 students, born of thee,
 Thee in thy democratic fêtes en-masse, thy high original
 festivals, operas, lecturers, preachers,

Thee in thy ultimata, (the preparations only now completed,
the edifice on sure foundations tied,)
Thee in thy pinnacles, intellect, thought, thy topmost
rational joys, thy love and godlike aspiration,
In thy resplendent coming literati, thy full-lung'd orators,
thy sacerdotal bards, kosmic savans,
These ! these in thee, (certain to come,) to-day I prophesy.

6

Land tolerating all, accepting all, not for the good alone,
all good for thee,
Land in the realms of God to be a realm unto thyself,
Under the rule of God to be a rule unto thyself.

(Lo, where arise three peerless stars,
To be thy natal stars my country, Ensemble, Evolution,
Freedom,
Set in the sky of Law.)

Land of unprecedented faith, God's faith,
Thy soil, thy very subsoil, all upheav'd,
The general inner earth so long so sedulously draped over,
now hence for what it is boldly laid bare,
Open'd by thee to heaven's light for benefit or bale.

Not for success alone,
Not to fair-sail unintermitted always,
The storm shall dash thy face, the murk of war and worse
than war shall cover thee all over,
(Wert capable of war, its tug and trials ? be capable of
peace, its trials,

For the tug and mortal strain of nations come at last in
prosperous peace, not war ;)

In many a smiling mask death shall approach beguiling
thee, thou in disease shalt swelter,
The livid cancer spread its hideous claws, clinging upon
thy breasts, seeking to strike thee deep within,
Consumption of the worst, moral consumption, shall
rouge thy face with hectic,

But thou shalt face thy fortunes, thy diseases, and sur-
mount them all,

Whatever they are to-day and whatever through time
they may be,

THOU MOTHER WITH THY EQUAL BROOD 423

They each and all shall lift and pass away and cease from
thee,
While thou, Time's spirals rounding, out of thyself, thyself
still extricating, fusing,
Equable, natural, mystical Union thou, (the mortal with
immortal blent,) FROM NOON TO STAY
Shalt soar toward the fulfilment of the future, the spirit of
the body and the mind,
The soul, its destinies. THOU ORB ALONE

The soul, its destinies, the real real,
(Purport of all these apparitions of the real;) Thou orb shalt full-day
In thee America, the soul, its destinies, Flooding with
Thou globe of globes! thou wonder nebulous! The silent near sea
By many a throe of heat and cold convuls'd, (by these And away
thyself solidifying,) The
Thou mental, moral orb—thou New, indeed new, Spiritual The
World! The
The Present holds thee not—for such vast growth as The
thine, The
For such unparallel'd flight as thine, such brood as thine, The
The FUTURE only holds thee and can hold thee. The

A PAUMANOK PICTURE

Two boats with nets lying off the sea-beach, quite still,
Ten fishermen waiting—they discover a thick school of
mossbonkers—they drop the join'd seine-ends in the
water,
The boats separate and row off, each on its rounding course
to the beach, enclosing the mossbonkers,
The net is drawn in by a windlass by those who stop ashore,
Some of the fishermen lounge in their boats, others stand
ankle-deep in the water, pois'd on strong legs,
The boats partly drawn up, the water slapping against
them,
Strew'd on the sand in heaps and windrows, well out from
the water, the green-back'd spotted mossbonkers.

FROM NOON TO STARRY NIGHT

THOU ORB ALOFT FULL-DAZZLING

THOU orb aloft full-dazzling ! thou hot October noon !
Flooding with sheeny light the gray beach sand,
The sibilant near sea with vistas far and foam,
And tawny streaks and shades and spreading blue ;
O sun of noon refulgent ! my special word to thee.

Hear me illustrious !
Thy lover me, for always I have loved thee,
Even as basking babe, then happy boy alone by some
 wood edge, thy touching-distant beams enough,
Or man matured, or young or old, as now to thee I launch
 my invocation.

(Thou canst not with thy dumbness me deceive,
I know before the fitting man all Nature yields,
Though answering not in words, the skies, trees, hear his
 voice—and thou O sun,
As for thy throes, thy perturbations, sudden breaks and
 shafts of flame gigantic,
I understand them, I know those flames, those perturba-
 tions well.)

Thou that with fructifying heat and light,
O'er myriad farms, o'er lands and waters North and
 South,
O'er Mississippi's endless course, o'er Texas' grassy plains,
 Kanada's woods,
O'er all the globe that turns its face to thee shining in
 space,
Thou that impartially infoldest all, not only continents, seas,
Thou that to grapes and weeds and little wild flowers
 givest so liberally,

Shed, shed thyself on mine and me, with but a fleeting ray
 out of thy million millions,
 Strike through these chants.

Nor only launch thy subtle dazzle and thy strength for
 these,
 Prepare the later afternoon of me myself—prepare my
 lengthening shadows,
 Prepare my starry nights.

FACES

1

SAUNTERING the pavement or riding the country by-road,
 lo, such faces !
 Faces of friendship, precision, caution, suavity, ideality,
 The spiritual-prescient face, the always welcome common
benevolent face,
 The face of the singing of music, the grand faces of natural
lawyers and judges broad at the back-top,
 The faces of hunters and fishers bulged at the brows, the
shaved blanch'd faces of orthodox citizens,
 The pure, extravagant, yearning, questioning artist's face,
 The ugly face of some beautiful soul, the handsome de-
tested or despised face,
 The sacred faces of infants, the illuminated face of the
mother of many children,
 The face of an amour, the face of veneration,
 The face as of a dream, the face of an immobile rock,
 The face withdrawn of its good and bad, a castrated face,
 A wild hawk, his wings clipp'd by the clipper,
 A stallion that yielded at last to the thongs and knife of
 the gelder.

Sauntering the pavement thus, or crossing the ceaseless
 ferry, faces and faces and faces,
 I see them and complain not, and am content with all.

2

Do you suppose I could be content with all if I thought them
 their own finale ?

This now is too lamentable a face for a man,
 Some abject louse asking leave to be, cringing for it,
 Some milk-nosed maggot blessing what lets it wrig to its
 hole.

This face is a dog's snout sniffing for garbage,
 Snakes nest in that mouth, I hear the sibilant threat.

This face is a haze more chill than the arctic sea,
 Its sleepy and wabbling icebergs crunch as they go.

This is a face of bitter herbs, this an emetic, they need no
 label,
 And more of the drug-shelf, laudanum, caoutchouc, or
 hog's-lard.

This face is an epilepsy, its wordless tongue gives out the
 unearthly cry,
 Its veins down the neck distend, its eyes roll till they show
 nothing but their whites,
 Its teeth grit, the palms of the hands are cut by the turn'd-
 in nails,
 The man falls struggling and foaming to the ground,
 while he speculates well.

This face is bitten by vermin and worms,
 And this is some murderer's knife with a half-pull'd
 scabbard.

This face owes to the sexton his dismalest fee,
 An unceasing death-bell tolls there.

3
 Features of my equals would you trick me with your creas'd
 and cadaverous march?

Well, you cannot trick me.

I see your rounded never-erased flow,
 I see 'neath the rims of your haggard and mean disguises.

Splay and twist as you like, poke with the tangling fores of
 fishes or rats,
 You'll be unmuzzled, you certainly will.

I saw the face of the most smear'd and slobbering idiot
 they had at the asylum,
 And I knew for my consolation what they knew not,
 I knew of the agents that emptied and broke my brother,
 The same wait to clear the rubbish from the fallen tene-
 ment,
 And I shall look again in a score or two of ages,
 And I shall meet the real landlord perfect and unharm'd,
 every inch as good as myself.

4

The Lord advances, and yet advances,
 Always the shadow in front, always the reach'd hand
 bringing up the laggards.

Out of this face emerge banners and horses—O superb! I
 see what is coming,
 I see the high pioneer-caps, see staves of runners clearing
 the way,
 I hear victorious drums.

This face is a life-boat,
 This is the face commanding and bearded, it asks no odds
 of the rest,
 This face is flavor'd fruit ready for eating,
 This face of a healthy honest boy is the programme of all
 good.

These faces bear testimony slumbering or awake,
 They show their descent from the Master himself.

Off the word I have spoken I except not one—red, white,
 black, are all deific,
 In each house is the ovum, it comes forth after a thousand
 years.

Spots or cracks at the windows do not disturb me,
 Tall and sufficient stand behind and make signs to me,
 I read the promise and patiently wait.

This is a full-grown lily's face,
 She speaks to the limber-hipp'd man near the garden
 pickets,

*Come here she blushing cries, Come nigh to me limber-
 hipp'd man,
 Stand at my side till I lean as high as I can upon you,
 Fill me with albescent honey, bend down to me,
 Rub to me with your chafing beard, rub to my breast and
 shoulders.*

5

*The old face of the mother of many children,
 Whist ! I am fully content.*

*Lull'd and late is the smoke of the First-day morning,
 It hangs low over the rows of trees by the fences,
 It hangs thin by the sassafras and wild-cherry and cat-
 brier under them.*

*I saw the rich ladies in full dress at the soiree,
 I heard what the singers were singing so long,
 Heard who sprang in crimson youth from the white froth
 and the water-blue.*

*Behold a woman !
 She looks out from her quaker cap, her face is clearer and
 more beautiful than the sky.*

*She sits in an armchair under the shaded porch of the
 farmhouse,
 The sun just shines on her old white head.*

*Her ample gown is of cream-hued linen,
 Her grandsons raised the flax, and her grand-daughters
 spun it with the distaff and the wheel.*

*The melodious character of the earth,
 The finish beyond which philosophy cannot go and does
 not wish to go,
 The justified mother of men.*

THE MYSTIC TRUMPETER

1

*HARK, some wild trumpeter, some strange musician,
 Hovering unseen in air, vibrates capricious tunes to-night.*

I hear thee trumpeter, listening alert I catch thy notes,
Now pouring, whirling like a tempest round me,
Now low, subdued, now in the distance lost.

2

Come nearer bodiless one, haply in thee resounds
Some dead composer, haply thy pensive life
Was fill'd with aspirations high, uniform'd ideals,
Waves, oceans musical, chaotically surging,
That now ecstatic ghost, close to me bending, thy cornet
 echoing, pealing,
Gives out to no one's ears but mine, but freely gives to
 mine,
That I may thee translate.

3

Blow trumpeter free and clear, I follow thee,
While at thy liquid prelude, glad, serene,
The fretting world, the streets, the noisy hours of day
 withdraw,
A holy calm descends like dew upon me,
I walk in cool refreshing night the walks of Paradise,
I scent the grass, the moist air and the roses ;
Thy song expands my numb'd imbonded spirit, thou freest,
 launchest me,
Floating and basking upon heaven's lake.

4

Blow again trumpeter ! and for my sensuous eyes,
Bring the old pageants, show the feudal world.
What charm thy music works ! thou makest pass before
 me,
Ladies and cavaliers long dead, barons are in their castle
 halls, the troubadours are singing,
Arm'd knights go forth to redress wrongs, some in quest of
 the holy Graal ;
I see the tournament, I see the contestants incased in heavy
 armor seated on stately champing horses,
I hear the shouts, the sounds of blows and smiting steel ;
I see the Crusaders' tumultuous armies—hark, how the
 cymbals clang,
Lo, where the monks walk in advance, bearing the cross on
 high.

5

Blow again trumpeter ! and for thy theme,
 Take now the enclosing theme of all, the solvent and the
 setting,
 Love, that is pulse of all, the sustenance and the pang,
 The heart of man and woman all for love,
 No other theme but love—knitting, enclosing, all-diffusing
 love.

O how the immortal phantoms crowd around me !
 I see the vast alembic ever working, I see and know the
 flames that heat the world,
 The glow, the blush, the beating hearts of lovers,
 So blissful happy some, and some so silent, dark, and nigh
 to death ;
 Love, that is all the earth to lovers—love, that mocks time
 and space,
 Love, that is day and night—love, that is sun and moon
 and stars,
 Love, that is crimson, sumptuous, sick with perfume,
 No other words but words of love, no other thought but
 love.

6

Blow again trumpeter—conjure war's alarums.

Swift to thy spell a shuddering hum like distant thunder
 rolls,
 Lo, where the arm'd men hasten—lo, mid the clouds of dust
 the glint of bayonets,
 I see the grime-faced cannoneers, I mark the rosy flash
 amid the smoke, I hear the cracking of the guns ;
 Nor war alone—thy fearful music-song, wild player, brings
 every sight of fear,
 The deeds of ruthless brigands, rapine, murder—I hear the
 cries for help !
 I see ships foundering at sea, I behold on deck and below
 deck the terrible tableaux.

7

O trumpeter, methinks I am myself the instrument thou
 playest,
 Thou melt'st my heart, my brain—thou movest, drawest,
 changest them at will ;

And now thy sullen notes send darkness through me,
 Thou takest away all cheering light, all hope,
 I see the enslaved, the overthrown, the hurt, the opprest
 of the whole earth,
 I feel the measureless shame and humiliation of my race,
 it becomes all mine,
 Mine too the revenges of humanity, the wrongs of ages,
 baffled feuds and hatreds,
 Utter defeat upon me weighs—all lost—the foe victorious,
 (Yet 'mid the ruins Pride colossal stands unshaken to the
 last,
 Endurance, resolution to the last.)

8

Now trumpeter for thy close,
 Vouchsafe a higher strain than any yet,
 Sing to my soul, renew its languishing faith and hope,
 Rouse up my slow belief, give me some vision of the future,
 Give me for once its prophecy and joy.
 O glad, exulting, culminating song!
 A vigor more than earth's is in thy notes,
 Marches of victory—man disenthral'd—the conqueror at
 last,
 Hymns to the universal God from universal man—all joy!
 A reborn race appears—a perfect world, all joy!
 Women and men in wisdom innocence and health—all joy!
 Riotous laughing bacchanals fill'd with joy!
 War, sorrow, suffering gone—the rank earth purged—
 nothing but joy left!
 The ocean fill'd with joy—the atmosphere all joy!
 Joy! joy! in freedom, worship, love! joy in the ecstasy
 of life!
 Enough to merely be! enough to breathe!
 Joy! joy! all over joy!

TO A LOCOMOTIVE IN WINTER

THEE for my recitative,
 Thee in the driving storm even as now, the snow, the
 winter-day declining,

Thee in thy panoply, thy measur'd dual throbbing and thy
beat convulsive,
Thy black cylindric body, golden brass and silvery steel,
Thy ponderous side-bars, parallel and connecting rods,
gyrating, shuttling at thy sides,
Thy metrical, now swelling pant and roar, now tapering in
the distance,
Thy great protruding head-light fix'd in front,
Thy long, pale, floating vapor-pennants, tinged with
delicate purple,
The dense and murky clouds out-belching from thy smoke-
stack,
Thy knitted frame, thy springs and valves, the tremulous
twinkle of thy wheels,
Thy train of cars behind, obedient, merrily following,
Through gale or calm, now swift, now slack, yet steadily
careering ;
Type of the modern—emblem of motion and power—pulse
of the continent,
For once come serve the Muse and merge in verse, even as
here I see thee,
With storm and buffeting gusts of wind and falling snow,
By day thy warning ringing bell to sound its notes,
By night thy silent signal lamps to swing.
Fierce-throated beauty !
Roll through my chant with all thy lawless music, thy
swinging lamps at night,
Thy madly-whistled laughter, echoing, rumbling like an
earthquake, rousing all,
Law of thyself complete, thine own track firmly holding,
(No sweetness debonair of tearful harp or glib piano thine,)
Thy trills of shrieks by rocks and hills return'd,
Launch'd o'er the prairies wide, across the lakes,
To the free skies unpent and glad and strong.

O MAGNET-SOUTH !

O MAGNET-SOUTH ! O glistening perfumed South ! my
South !
O quick mettle, rich blood, impulse and love ! good and
evil ! O all dear to me !

O dear to me my birth-things—all moving things and the
trees where I was born—the grains, plants, rivers,
Dear to me my own slow sluggish rivers where they flow,
distant, over flats of silvery sands or through
swamps,

Dear to me the Roanoke, the Savannah, the Altamahaw,
the Pedee, the Tombigbee, the Santee, the Coosa and
the Sabine,

O pensive, far away wandering, I return with my soul to
haunt their banks again,

Again in Florida I float on transparent lakes, I float on the
Okeechobee, I cross the hummock-land or through
pleasant openings or dense forests,

I see the parrots in the woods, I see the papaw-tree and the
blossoming titi ;

Again, sailing in my coaster on deck, I coast off Georgia, I
coast up the Carolinas,

I see where the live-oak is growing, I see where the yellow-
pine, the scented bay-tree, the lemon and orange, the
cypress, the graceful palmetto,

I pass rude sea-headlands and enter Pamlico sound through
an inlet, and dart my vision inland ;

O the cotton plant ! the growing fields of rice, sugar,
hemp !

The cactus guarded with thorns, the laurel-tree with large
white flowers,

The range afar, the richness and barrenness, the old woods
charged with mistletoe and trailing moss,

The piney odor and the gloom, the awful natural stillness,
(here in these dense swamps the freebooter carries his
gun, and the fugitive has his conceal'd hut ;)

O the strange fascination of these half-known half-impass-
able swamps, infested by reptiles, resounding with the
bellow of the alligator, the sad noises of the night-owl
and the wild-cat, and the whirr of the rattle-
snake,

The mocking-bird, the American mimic, singing all the
forenoon, singing through the moon-lit night,

The humming-bird, the wild turkey, the raccoon, the
opossum ;

A Kentucky corn-field, the tall, graceful, long-leav'd corn,
slender, flapping, bright green, with tassels, with
beautiful ears each well-sheath'd in its husk ;

O my heart ! O tender and fierce pangs, I can stand them
 not, I will depart ;
 O to be a Virginian where I grew up ! O to be a Carolinian !
 O longings irrepressible ! O I will go back to old Tennessee
 and never wander more.

MANNAHATTA

I was asking for something specific and perfect for my city,
 Whereupon lo ! upsprang the aboriginal name.
 Now I see what there is in a name, a word, liquid, sane,
 unruly, musical, self-sufficient,
 I see that the word of my city is that word from of old,
 Because I see that word nested in nests of water-bays,
 superb,
 Rich, hemm'd thick all around with sailships and steam-
 ships, an island sixteen miles long, solid-founded,
 Numberless crowded streets, high growths of iron, slender,
 strong, light, splendidly uprising toward clear skies,
 Tides swift and ample, well-loved by me, toward sundown,
 The flowing sea-currents, the little islands, larger adjoining
 islands, the heights, the villas,
 The countless masts, the white shore-steamers, the lighters,
 the ferry-boats, the black sea-steamers well-model'd,
 The down-town streets, the jobbers' houses of business, the
 houses of business of the ship-merchants and money-
 brokers, the river-streets,
 Immigrants arriving, fifteen or twenty thousand in a week,
 The carts hauling goods, the manly race of drivers of horses,
 the brown-faced sailors,
 The summer air, the bright sun shining, and the sailing
 clouds aloft,
 The winter snows, the sleigh-bells, the broken ice in the
 river, passing along up or down with the flood-tide or
 ebb-tide,
 The mechanics of the city, the masters, well-form'd,
 beautiful-faced, looking you straight in the eyes,
 Trottoirs throng'd, vehicles, Broadway, the women, the
 shops and shows,

A million people—manners free and superb—open voices—
hospitality—the most courageous and friendly young
men,

City of hurried and sparkling waters! city of spires and
masts!

City nested in bays! my city!

ALL IS TRUTH

O ME, man of slack faith so long,
Standing aloof, denying portions so long,
Only aware to-day of compact all-diffused truth,
Discovering to-day there is no lie or form of lie, and can be
none, but grows as inevitably upon itself as the truth
does upon itself,

Or as any law of the earth or any natural production of the
earth does.

(This is curious and may not be realized immediately, but it
must be realized,

I feel in myself that I represent falsehoods equally with the
rest,

And that the universe does.)

Where has fail'd a perfect return indifferent of lies or the
truth?

Is it upon the ground, or in water or fire? or in the spirit of
man? or in the meat and blood?

Meditating among liars and retreating sternly into myself,

I see that there are really no liars or lies after all,

And that nothing fails its perfect return, and that what
are called lies are perfect returns,

And that each thing exactly represents itself and what has
preceded it,

And that the truth includes all, and is compact just as
much as space is compact,

And that there is no flaw or vacuum in the amount of the
truth—but that all is truth without exception;

And henceforth I will go celebrate any thing I see or am,

And sing and laugh and deny nothing.

A RIDDLE SONG.

THAT which eludes this verse and any verse,
Unheard by sharpest ear, unform'd in clearest eye or
 cunningest mind,
Nor lore nor fame, nor happiness nor wealth,
And yet the pulse of every heart and life throughout the
 world incessantly,
Which you and I and all pursuing ever ever miss,
Open but still a secret, the real of the real, an illusion,
Costless, vouchsafed to each, yet never man the owner,
Which poets vainly seek to put in rhyme, historians in
 prose,
Which sculptor never chisel'd yet, nor painter painted,
Which vocalist never sung, nor orator nor actor ever
 utter'd,
Invoking here and now I challenge for my song.

Indifferently, 'mid public, private haunts, in solitude,
Behind the mountain and the wood,
Companion of the city's busiest streets, through the
 assemblage,
It and its radiations constantly glide.

In looks of fair unconscious babes,
Or strangely in the coffin'd dead,
Or show of breaking dawn or stars by night,
As some dissolving delicate film of dreams,
Hiding yet lingering.

Two little breaths of words comprising it,
Two words, yet all from first to last comprised in it.
How ardently for it !
How many ships have sail'd and sunk for it !
How many travelers started from their homes and ne'er
 return'd !
How much of genius boldly staked and lost for it !
What countless stores of beauty, love, ventur'd for it !
How all superbest deeds since Time began are traceable to
 it—and shall be to the end !
How all heroic martyrdoms to it !

How, justified by it, the horrors, evils, battles of the earth !
How the bright fascinating lambent flames of it, in every
age and land, have drawn men's eyes,
Rich as a sunset on the Norway coast, the sky, the islands,
and the cliffs,
Or midnight's silent glowing northern lights unreachable.
Haply God's riddle it, so vague and yet so certain,
The soul for it, and all the visible universe for it,
And heaven at last for it.

EXCELSIOR

Who has gone farthest ? for I would go farther,
And who has been just ? for I would be the most just
person of the earth,
And who most cautious ? for I would be more cautious,
And who has been happiest ? O I think it is I—I think no
one was ever happier than I,
And who has lavish'd all ? for I lavish constantly the best
I have,
And who proudest ? for I think I have reason to be the
proudest son alive—for I am the son of the brawny
and tall-topt city,
And who has been bold and true ? for I would be the
boldest and truest being of the universe,
And who benevolent ? for I would show more benevolence
than all the rest,
And who has receiv'd the love of the most friends ? for I
know what it is to receive the passionate love of many
friends,
And who possesses a perfect and enamour'd body ? for I
do not believe any one possesses a more perfect or
enamour'd body than mine,
And who thinks the amplest thoughts ? for I would sur-
round those thoughts,
And who has made hymns fit for the earth ? for I am mad
with devouring ecstasy to make joyous hymns for the
whole earth.

AH POVERTIES, WINCINGS, AND SULKY RETREATS

Ah poverties, wincings, and sulky retreats,
 Ah you foes that in conflict have overcome me,
 (For what is my life or any man's life but a conflict with
 foes, the old, the incessant war ?)
 You degradations, you tussle with passions and appetites,
 You smarts from dissatisfied friendships, (ah wounds the
 sharpest of all !)
 You toil of painful and choked articulations, you mean-
 nesses,
 You shallow tongue-talks at tables, (my tongue the
 shallowest of any ;)
 You broken resolutions, you racking angers, you smother'd
 ennuis !
 Ah think not you finally triumph, my real self has yet to
 come forth,
 It shall yet march forth o'ermastering, till all lies beneath
 me,
 It shall yet stand up the soldier of ultimate victory.

THOUGHTS

Of public opinion,
 Of a calm and cool fiat sooner or later, (how impassive !
 how certain and final !)
 Of the President with pale face asking secretly to himself,
 What will the people say at last ?
 Of the frivolous Judge—of the corrupt Congressman,
 Governor, Mayor—of such as these standing helpless
 and exposed,
 Of the mumbling and screaming priest, (soon, soon de-
 serted,)
 Of the lessening year by year of venerableness, and of the
 dicta of officers, statutes, pulpits, schools,
 Of the rising forever taller and stronger and broader of the
 intuitions of men and women, and of Self-esteem and
 Personality ;
 Of the true New World—of the Democracies resplendent
 en-masse,

Of the conformity of politics, armies, navies, to them,
Of the shining sun by them—of the inherent light, greater
than the rest,
Of the envelopment of all by them, and the effusion of all
from them.

MEDIUMS

THEY shall arise in the States,
They shall report Nature, laws, physiology, and happiness,
They shall illustrate Democracy and the kosmos,
They shall be alimentive, amative, perceptive,
They shall be complete women and men, their pose brawny
and supple, their drink water, their blood clean and
clear,
They shall fully enjoy materialism and the sight of pro-
ducts, they shall enjoy the sight of the beef, lumber,
bread-stuffs, of Chicago the great city,
They shall train themselves to go in public to become
orators and oratresses,
Strong and sweet shall their tongues be, poems and materials
of poems shall come from their lives, they shall be
makers and finders,
Of them and of their works shall emerge divine conveyers,
to convey gospels,
Characters, events, retrospections, shall be convey'd in
gospels, trees, animals, waters, shall be convey'd,
Death, the future, the invisible faith, shall all be convey'd.

WEAVE IN, MY HARDY LIFE

WEAVE in, weave in, my hardy life,
Weave yet a soldier strong and full for great campaigns to
come,
Weave in red blood, weave sinews in like ropes, the senses,
sight weave in,
Weave lasting sure, weave day and night the weft, the
warp, incessant weave, tire not,
(We know not what the use O life, nor know the aim, the
end, nor really aught we know,

But know the work, the need goes on and shall go on, the
death-envelop'd march of peace as well as war goes on,)
For great campaigns of peace the same the wiry threads to
weave,
We know not why or what, yet weave, forever weave.

SPAIN, 1873-74

Out of the murk of heaviest clouds,
Out of the feudal wrecks and heap'd-up skeletons of kings,
Out of that old entire European debris, the shatter'd
mummeries,
Ruin'd cathedrals, crumble of palaces, tombs of priests,
Lo, Freedom's features fresh undimm'd look forth—the
same immortal face looks forth ;
(A glimpse as of thy Mother's face Columbia,
A flash significant as of a sword,
Beaming towards thee.)

Nor think we forget thee maternal ;
Lag'd'st thou so long ? shall the clouds close again upon
thee ?
Ah, but thou hast thyself now appear'd to us—we know
thee,
Thou hast given us a sure proof, the glimpse of thyself,
Thou waitest there as everywhere thy time.

BY BROAD POTOMAC'S SHORE

By broad Potomac's shore, again old tongue,
(Still uttering, still ejaculating, canst never cease this
babble ?)
Again old heart so gay, again to you, your sense, the full
flush spring returning,
Again the freshness and the odors, again Virginia's summer
sky, pellucid blue and silver,
Again the forenoon purple of the hills,
Again the deathless grass, so noiseless soft and green,
Again the blood-red roses blooming.

Perfume this book of mine O blood-red roses !
 Lave subtly with your waters every line Potomac !
 Give me of you O spring, before I close, to put between its
 pages !
 O forenoon purple of the hills, before I close, of you !
 O deathless grass, of you !

FROM FAR DAKOTA'S CAÑONS

June 25, 1876

FROM far Dakota's cañons,
 Lands of the wild ravine, the dusky Sioux, the lonesome
 stretch, the silence,
 Haply to-day a mournful wail, haply a trumpet-note for
 heroes.

The battle-bulletin,
 The Indian ambushade, the craft, the fatal environment,
 The cavalry companies fighting to the last in sternest
 heroism,
 In the midst of their little circle, with their slaughter'd
 horses for breastworks,
 The fall of Custer and all his officers and men.

Continues yet the old, old legend of our race,
 The loftiest of life upheld by death,
 The ancient banner perfectly maintain'd,
 O lesson opportune, O how I welcome thee !
 As sitting in dark days,
 Lone, sulky, through the time's thick murk looking in vain
 for light, for hope,
 From unsuspected parts a fierce and momentary proof,
 (The sun there at the centre though conceal'd,
 Electric life forever at the centre,)
 Breaks forth a lightning flash.

Thou of the tawny flowing hair in battle,
 I erewhile saw, with erect head, pressing ever in front,
 bearing a bright sword in thy hand,
 Now ending well in death the splendid fever of thy deeds,

(I bring no dirge for it or thee, I bring a glad triumphal sonnet,)
 Desperate and glorious, aye in defeat most desperate, most glorious,
 After thy many battles in which never yielding up a gun or a color,
 Leaving behind thee a memory sweet to soldiers,
 Thou yieldest up thyself.

OLD WAR-DREAMS

In midnight sleep of many a face of anguish,
 Of the look at first of the mortally wounded, (of that indescribable look,)
 Of the dead on their backs with arms extended wide,
 I dream, I dream, I dream.

Of scenes of Nature, fields and mountains,
 Of skies so beauteous after a storm, and at night the moon so unearthly bright,
 Shining sweetly, shining down, where we dig the trenches and gather the heaps,
 I dream, I dream, I dream.

Long have they pass'd, faces and trenches and fields,
 Where through the carnage I moved with a callous composure, or away from the fallen,
 Onward I sped at the time—but now of their forms at night,
 I dream, I dream, I dream.

THICK-SPRINKLED BUNTING!

THICK-SPRINKLED bunting! flag of stars!
 Long yet your road, fateful flag—long yet your road, and lined with bloody death,
 For the prize I see at issue at last is the world,
 All its ships and shores I see interwoven with your threads greedy banner;

Dream'd again the flags of kings, highest borne, to flaunt
unrival'd ?

O hasten flag of man—O with sure and steady step, passing
highest flags of kings,

Walk supreme to the heavens mighty symbol—run up
above them all,

Flag of stars ! thick-sprinkled bunting !

WHAT BEST I SEE IN THEE

To U. S. G. return'd from his World's Tour

WHAT best I see in thee,

Is not that where thou mov'st down history's great high-
ways,

Ever undimm'd by time shoots warlike victory's dazzle,

Or that thou sat'st where Washington sat, ruling the land
in peace,

Or thou the man whom feudal Europe fêted, venerable Asia
swarm'd upon,

Who walk'd with kings with even pace the round world's
promenade ;

But that in foreign lands, in all thy walks with kings,

Those prairie sovereigns of the West, Kansas, Missouri,
Illinois,

Ohio's, Indiana's millions, comrades, farmers, soldiers, all
to the front,

Invisibly with thee walking with kings with even pace the
round world's promenade,

Were all so justified.

SPIRIT THAT FORM'D THIS SCENE

(Written in Platte Cañon, Colorado)

SPIRIT that form'd this scene,

These tumbled rock-piles grim and red,

These reckless heaven-ambitious peaks,

These gorges, turbulent-clear streams, this naked freshness,

These formless wild arrays, for reasons of their own,
I know thee, savage spirit—we have communed together,
Mine too such wild arrays, for reasons of their own ;
Was't charged against my chants they had forgotten art ?
To fuse within themselves its rules precise and delicatessen ?
The lyrist's measur'd beat, the wrought-out temple's
 grace—column and polish'd arch forgot ?
But thou that revelest here—spirit that form'd this scene,
They have remember'd thee.

AS I WALK THESE BROAD MAJESTIC DAYS

As I walk these broad majestic days of peace,
(For the war, the struggle of blood finish'd, wherein, O
 terrific Ideal,
Against vast odds erewhile having gloriously won,
Now thou stridest on, yet perhaps in time toward denser
 wars,
Perhaps to engage in time in still more dreadful contests,
 dangers,
Longer campaigns and crises, labors beyond all others,)
Around me I hear that eclat of the world, politics, produce,
The announcements of recognized things, science,
The approved growth of cities and the spread of inventions.
I see the ships, (they will last a few years,)
The vast factories with their foremen and workmen,
And hear the indorsement of all, and do not object to it.

But I too announce solid things,
Science, ships, politics, cities, factories, are not nothing,
Like a grand procession to music of distant bugles
 pouring, triumphantly moving, and grander heaving
 in sight,

They stand for realities—all is as it should be.

Then my realities ;

What else is so real as mine ?

Liberty and the divine average, freedom to every slave
 on the face of the earth,

The rapt promises and luminè of seers, the spiritual world,
 these centuries-lasting songs,
 And our visions, the visions of poets, the most solid
 announcements of any.

A CLEAR MIDNIGHT

THIS is thy hour O Soul, thy free flight into the wordless,
 Away from books, away from art, the day erased, the
 lesson done,
 Thee fully forth emerging, silent, gazing, pondering the
 themes thou lovest best,
 Night, sleep, death and the stars.

SONGS OF PARTING

AS THE TIME DRAWS NIGH

As the time draws nigh glooming a cloud,
A dread beyond of I know not what darkens me.

I shall go forth,
I shall traverse the States awhile, but I cannot tell whither
or how long,
Perhaps soon some day or night while I am singing my voice
will suddenly cease.

O book, O chants ! must all then amount to but this ?
Must we barely arrive at this beginning of us ?—and yet it
is enough, O soul ;
O soul, we have positively appear'd—that is enough.

YEARS OF THE MODERN!

YEARS of the modern ! years of the unperform'd !
Your horizon rises, I see it parting away for more august
dramas,
I see not America only, not only Liberty's nation but other
nations preparing,
I see tremendous entrances and exits, new combinations,
the solidarity of races,
I see that force advancing with irresistible power on the
world's stage,
(Have the old forces, the old wars, played their parts ?
are the acts suitable to them closed ?)
I see Freedom, completely arm'd and victorious and very
haughty, with Law on one side and Peace on the
other,
A stupendous trio all issuing forth against the idea of
caste ;

What historic denouements are these we so rapidly approach ?

I see men marching and countermarching by swift millions,
I see the frontiers and boundaries of the old aristocracies
broken,

I see the landmarks of European kings removed,
I see this day the People beginning their landmarks, (all
others give way ;)

Never were such sharp questions ask'd as this day,
Never was average man, his soul, more energetic, more
like a God,

Lo, how he urges and urges, leaving the masses no rest !
His daring foot is on land and sea everywhere, he colonizes
the Pacific, the archipelagoes,

With the steamship, the electric telegraph, the newspaper,
the wholesale engines of war,

With these and the world-spreading factories he interlinks
all geography, all lands ;

What whispers are these O lands, running ahead of you,
passing under the seas ?

Are all nations communing ? is there going to be but one
heart to the globe ?

Is humanity forming en-masse ? for lo, tyrants tremble,
crowns grow dim,

The earth, restive, confronts a new era, perhaps a general
divine war,

No one knows what will happen next, such portents fill the
days and nights ;

Years prophetic ! the space ahead as I walk, as I vainly
try to pierce it, is full of phantoms,

Unborn deeds, things soon to be, project their shapes
around me,

This incredible rush and heat, this strange ecstatic fever
of dreams O years !

Your dreams O years, how they penetrate through me !
(I know not whether I sleep or wake ;)

The perform'd America and Europe grow dim, retiring in
shadow behind me,

The unperform'd, more gigantic than ever, advance,
advance upon me.

ASHES OF SOLDIERS

ASHES of soldiers South or North,
As I muse retrospective murmuring a chant in thought,
The war resumes, again to my sense your shapes,
And again the advance of the armies.

Noiseless as mists and vapors,
From their graves in the trenches ascending,
From cemeteries all through Virginia and Tennessee,
From every point of the compass out of the countless
 graves,
In wafted clouds, in myriads large, or squads of twos or
 threes or single ones they come,
And silently gather round me.

Now sound no note O trumpeters,
Not at the head of my cavalry parading on spirited horses,
With sabres drawn and glistening, and carbines by their
 thighs, (ah my brave horsemen !
My handsome tan-faced horsemen ! what life, what joy
 and pride,
With all the perils were yours.)

Nor you drummers, neither at reveillé at dawn,
Nor the long roll alarming the camp, nor even the muffled
 beat for a burial,
Nothing from you this time O drummers bearing my
 warlike drums.

But aside from these and the marts of wealth and the
 crowded promenade,
Admitting around me comrades close unseen by the rest
 and voiceless,
The slain elate and alive again, the dust and debris alive,
I chant this chant of my silent soul in the name of all dead
 soldiers.

Faces so pale with wondrous eyes, very dear, gather closer
 yet,
Draw close, but speak not.

Phantoms of countless lost,
Invisible to the rest henceforth become my companions,
Follow me ever—desert me not while I live.

Sweet are the blooming cheeks of the living—sweet are the
musical voices sounding,
But sweet, ah sweet, are the dead with their silent eyes.

Dearest comrades, all is over and long gone,
But love is not over—and what love, O comrades !
Perfume from battle-fields rising, up from the foetor arising.

Perfume therefore my chant, O love, immortal love,
Give me to bathe the memories of all dead soldiers,
Shroud them, embalm them, cover them all over with
tender pride.

Perfume all—make all wholesome,
Make these ashes to nourish and blossom,
O love, solve all, fructify all with the last chemistry.

Give me exhaustless, make me a fountain,
That I exhale love from me wherever I go like a moist
perennial dew,
For the ashes of all dead soldiers South or North.

THOUGHTS

1

Of these years I sing,
How they pass and have pass'd through convuls'd pains,
as through parturitions,
How America illustrates birth, muscular youth, the
promise, the sure fulfilment, the absolute success,
despite of people—illustrates evil as well as good,
The vehement struggle so fierce for unity in one's-self ;
How many hold despairingly yet to the models departed,
caste, myths, obedience, compulsion, and to in-
fidelity,
How few see the arrived models, the athletes, the Western
States, or see freedom or spirituality, or hold any faith
in results,

(But I see the athletes, and I see the results of the war
glorious and inevitable, and they again leading to
other results.)

How the great cities appear—how the Democratic masses,
turbulent, wilful, as I love them,
How the whirl, the contest, the wrestle of evil with good, the
sounding and resounding, keep on and on,
How society waits uniform'd, and is for a while between
things ended and things begun,
How America is the continent of glories, and of the triumph
of freedom and of the Democracies, and of the fruits
of society, and of all that is begun,
And how the States are complete in themselves—and how
all triumphs and glories are complete in themselves,
to lead onward,
And how these of mine and of the States will in their turn be
convuls'd, and serve other parturitions and transitions,
And how all people, sights, combinations, the democratic
masses too, serve—and how every fact, and war
itself, with all its horrors, serves,
And how now or at any time each serves the exquisite
transition of death.

2

Of seeds dropping into the ground, of births,
Of the steady concentration of America, inland, upward,
to impregnable and swarming places,
Of what Indiana, Kentucky, Arkansas, and the rest, are to
be,
Of what a few years will show there in Nebraska, Colorado,
Nevada, and the rest,
(Or afar, mounting the Northern Pacific to Sitka or Alaska,)
Of what the feuillage of America is the preparation for—
and of what all sights, North, South, East and West,
are,
Of this Union welded in blood, of the solemn price paid, of
the unnamed lost ever present in my mind ;
Of the temporary use of materials for identity's sake,
Of the present, passing, departing—of the growth of
completer men than any yet,
Of all sloping down there where the fresh free giver the
mother, the Mississippi flows,

Of mighty inland cities yet unsurvey'd and unsuspected,
Of the new and good names, of the modern developments, of
inalienable homesteads,
Of a free and original life there, of simple diet and clean
and sweet blood,
Of liveness, majestic faces, clear eyes, and perfect physique
there,
Of immense spiritual results future years far West, each side
of the Anahuacs,
Of these songs, well understood there, (being made for that
area,)
Of the native scorn of grossness and gain there,
(O it lurks in me night and day—what is gain after all to
savageness and freedom?)

SONG AT SUNSET

SPLENDOR of ended day floating and filling me,
Hour prophetic, hour resuming the past,
Inflating my throat, you divine average,
You earth and life till the last ray gleams I sing.

Open mouth of my soul uttering gladness,
Eyes of my soul seeing perfection,
Natural life of me faithfully praising things,
Corroborating forever the triumph of things.

Illustrious every one!
Illustrious what we name space, sphere of unnumber'd
spirits,
Illustrious the mystery of motion in all beings, even the
tiniest insect,
Illustrious the attribute of speech, the senses, the body,
Illustrious the passing light—illustrious the pale reflection
on the new moon in the western sky,
Illustrious whatever I see or hear or touch, to the last.

Good in all,
In the satisfaction and aplomb of animals,
In the annual return of the seasons,
In the hilarity of youth,

In the strength and flush of manhood,
In the grandeur and exquisiteness of old age,
In the superb vistas of death.

Wonderful to depart !
Wonderful to be here !
The heart, to jet the all-alike and innocent blood !
To breathe the air, how delicious !
To speak—to walk—to seize something by the hand !
To prepare for sleep, for bed, to look on my rose-color'd
flesh !
To be conscious of my body, so satisfied, so large !
To be this incredible God I am !
To have gone forth among other Gods, these men and
women I love.

Wonderful how I celebrate you and myself !
How my thoughts play subtly at the spectacles around !
How the clouds pass silently overhead !
How the earth darts on and on ! and how the sun, moon,
stars, dart on and on !
How the water sports and sings ! (surely it is alive !)
How the trees rise and stand up, with strong trunks, with
branches and leaves !
(Surely there is something more in each of the trees, some
living soul.)

O amazement of things—even the least particle !
O spirituality of things !
O strain musical flowing through ages and continents, now
reaching me and America !
I take your strong chords, intersperse them, and cheerfully
pass them forward.

I too carol the sun, usher'd or at noon, or as now, setting,
I too throb to the brain and beauty of the earth and of all
the growths of the earth,
I too have felt the resistless call of myself.

As I steam'd down the Mississippi,
As I wander'd over the prairies,
As I have lived, as I have look'd through my windows my
eyes,

As I went forth in the morning, as I beheld the light break-
ing in the east,
As I bathed on the beach of the Eastern Sea, and again on
the beach of the Western Sea,
As I roam'd the streets of inland Chicago, whatever streets
I have roam'd,
Or cities or silent woods, or even amid the sights of war,
Wherever I have been I have charged myself with content-
ment and triumph.

I sing to the last the equalities modern or old,
I sing the endless finalés of things,
I say Nature continues, glory continues,
I praise with electric voice,
For I do not see one imperfection in the universe,
And I do not see one cause or result lamentable at last in
the universe.

O setting sun ! though the time has come,
I still warble under you, if none else does, unmitigated
adoration.

AS AT THY PORTALS ALSO DEATH

As at thy portals also death,
Entering thy sovereign, dim, illimitable grounds,
To memories of my mother, to the divine blending, mater-
nity,
To her, buried and gone, yet buried not, gone not from me,
(I see again the calm benignant face fresh and beautiful
still,
I sit by the form in the coffin,
I kiss and kiss convulsively again the sweet old lips, the
cheeks, the closed eyes in the coffin ;)
To her, the ideal woman, practical, spiritual, of all of earth,
life, love, to me the best,
I grave a monumental line, before I go, amid these songs,
And set a tombstone here.

MY LEGACY

THE business man the acquirer vast,
After assiduous years surveying results, preparing for
departure,
Devises houses and lands to his children, bequeaths stocks,
goods, funds for a school or hospital,
Leaves money to certain companions to buy tokens,
souvenirs of gems and gold.

But I, my life surveying, closing,
With nothing to show to devise from its idle years,
Nor houses nor lands, nor tokens of gems or gold for my
friends,
Yet certain remembrances of the war for you, and after you,
And little souvenirs of camps and soldiers, with my love,
I bind together and bequeath in this bundle of songs.

PENSIVE ON HER DEAD GAZING

PENSIVE on her dead gazing I heard the Mother of All,
Desperate on the torn bodies, on the forms covering the
battle-fields gazing,
(As the last gun ceased, but the scent of the powder-smoke
linger'd,)
As she call'd to her earth with mournful voice while she
stalk'd,
Absorb them well O my earth, she cried, I charge you lose
not my sons, lose not an atom,
And you streams absorb them well, taking their dear blood,
And you local spots, and you airs that swim above lightly
impalpable,
And all you essences of soil and growth, and you my rivers'
depths,
And you mountain sides, and the woods where my dear
children's blood trickling redden'd,
And you trees down in your roots to bequeath to all future
trees,
My dead absorb or South or North—my young men's
bodies absorb, and their precious precious blood,

Which holding in trust for me faithfully back again give me
many a year hence,
In unseen essence and odor of surface and grass, centuries
hence,
In blowing airs from the fields back again give me my
darlings, give my immortal heroes,
Exhale me them centuries hence, breathe me their breath,
let not an atom be lost,
O years and graves ! O air and soil ! O my dead, an aroma
sweet !
Exhale them perennial sweet death, years, centuries hence.

CAMPS OF GREEN

Not alone those camps of white, old comrades of the wars,
When as order'd forward, after a long march,
Footsore and weary, soon as the light lessens we halt for the
night,
Some of us so fatigued carrying the gun and knapsack,
dropping asleep in our tracks,
Others pitching the little tents, and the fires lit up begin to
sparkle,
Outposts of pickets posted surrounding alert through the
dark,
And a word provided for countersign, careful for safety,
Till to the call of the drummers at daybreak loudly beating
the drums,
We rise up refresh'd, the night and sleep pass'd over, and
resume our journey,
Or proceed to battle.

Lo, the camps of the tents of green,
Which the days of peace keep filling, and the days of war
keep filling,
With a mystic army, (is it too order'd forward ? is it too
only halting awhile,
Till night and sleep pass over ?)
Now in those camps of green, in their tents dotting the
world,

In the parents, children, husbands, wives, in them, in the old
 and young,
 Sleeping under the sunlight, sleeping under the moonlight,
 content and silent there at last,
 Behold the mighty bivouac-field and waiting-camp of all,
 Of the corps and generals all, and the President over the
 corps and generals all,
 And of each of us O soldiers, and of each and all in the ranks
 we fought,
 (There without hatred we all, all meet.)
 For presently O soldiers, we too camp in our place in the
 bivouac-camps of green,
 But we need not provide for outposts, nor word for the
 countersign,
 Nor drummer to beat the morning drum.

THE SOBBING OF THE BELLS

(Midnight, Sept. 19-20, 1881)

THE sobbing of the bells, the sudden death-news every-
 where,
 The slumberers rouse, the rapport of the People,
 (Full well they know that message in the darkness,
 Full well return, respond within their breasts, their brains,
 the sad reverberations,)
 The passionate toll and clang—city to city, joining, sound-
 ing, passing,
 Those heart-beats of a Nation in the night.

AS THEY DRAW TO A CLOSE

As they draw to a close,
 Of what underlies the precedent songs—of my aims in
 them,
 Of the seed I have sought to plant in them,
 Of joy, sweet joy, through many a year, in them,
 (For them, for them have I lived, in them my work is done,)

Of many an aspiration fond, of many a dream and plan ;
 Through Space and Time fused in a chant, and the flowing
 eternal identity,
 To Nature encompassing these, encompassing God—to
 the joyous, electric all,
 To the sense of Death, and accepting exulting in Death in
 its turn the same as life,
 The entrance of man to sing ;
 To compact you, ye parted, diverse lives,
 To put rapport the mountains and rocks and streams,
 And the winds of the north, and the forests of oak and pine,
 With you O soul.

JOY, SHIPMATE, JOY !

Joy, shipmate, joy !
 (Pleas'd to my soul at death I cry,)
 Our life is closed, our life begins,
 The long, long anchorage we leave,
 The ship is clear at last, she leaps !
 She swiftly courses from the shore,
 Joy, shipmate, joy.

THE UNTOLD WANT

THE untold want by life and land ne'er granted,
 Now voyager sail thou forth to seek and find.

PORTALS

WHAT are those of the known but to ascend and enter the
 Unknown ?
 And what are those of life but for Death ?

THESE CAROLS

THESE carols sung to cheer my passage through the world I
 see,
 For completion I dedicate to the Invisible World.

NOW FINALE TO THE SHORE

Now finale to the shore,
 Now land and life finale and farewell,
 Now Voyager depart, (much, much for thee is yet in store,)
 Often enough hast thou adventur'd o'er the seas,
 Cautiously cruising, studying the charts,
 Duly again to port and hawser's tie returning;
 But now obey thy cherish'd secret wish,
 Embrace thy friends, leave all in order,
 To port and hawser's tie no more returning,
 Depart upon thy endless cruise old Sailor.

SO LONG!

To conclude, I announce what comes after me.

I remember I said before my leaves sprang at all,
 I would raise my voice jocund and strong with reference to
 consummations.

When America does what was promis'd,
 When through these States walk a hundred millions of
 superb persons,
 When the rest part away for superb persons and contribute
 to them,
 When breeds of the most perfect mothers denote America,
 Then to me and mine our due fruition.

I have press'd through in my own right,
 I have sung the body and the soul, war and peace have I
 sung, and the songs of life and death,
 And the songs of birth, and shown that there are many
 births.

I have offer'd my style to every one, I have journey'd with
 confident step;
 While my pleasure is yet at the full I whisper *So long!*
 And take the young woman's hand and the young man's
 hand for the last time.

I announce natural persons to arise,
I announce justice triumphant,
I announce uncompromising liberty and equality,
I announce the justification of candor and the justification
of pride.

I announce that the identity of these States is a single
identity only,
I announce the Union more and more compact, indissoluble,
I announce splendors and majesties to make all the previous
politics of the earth insignificant.

I announce adhesiveness, I say it shall be limitless, un-
loosen'd,
I say you shall yet find the friend you were looking for.

I announce a man or woman coming, perhaps you are the
one, (*So long !*)
I announce the great individual, fluid as Nature, chaste,
affectionate, compassionate, fully arm'd.

I announce a life that shall be copious, vehement, spiritual,
bold,
I announce an end that shall lightly and joyfully meet
its translation.

I announce myriads of youths, beautiful, gigantic, sweet-
blooded,
I announce a race of splendid and savage old men.

O thicker and faster—(*So long !*)
O crowding too close upon me,
I foresee too much, it means more than I thought,
It appears to me I am dying.

Hasten throat and sound your last,
Salute me—salute the days once more. Peal the old cry
once more.

Screaming electric, the atmosphere using,
At random glancing, each as I notice absorbing,
Swiftly on, but a little while alighting,
Curious envelop'd messages delivering,

Sparkles hot, seed ethereal down in the dirt dropping,
Myself unknowing, my commission obeying, to question it
never daring,
To ages and ages yet the growth of the seed leaving,
To troops out of the war arising, they the tasks I have set
promulging,
To women certain whispers of myself bequeathing, their
affection me more clearly explaining,
To young men my problems offering—no dallier I—I the
muscle of their brains trying,
So I pass, a little time vocal, visible, contrary,
Afterward a melodious echo, passionately bent for, (death
making me really undying,)
The best of me then when no longer visible, for toward
that I have been incessantly preparing.

What is there more, that I lag and pause and crouch
extended with unshut mouth ?
Is there a single final farewell ?

My songs cease, I abandon them,
From behind the screen where I hid I advance personally
solely to you.

Camerado, this is no book,
Who touches this touches a man,
(Is it night ? are we here together alone ?)
It is I you hold and who holds you,
I spring from the pages into your arms—decease calls me
forth.

O how your fingers drowse me,
Your breath falls around me like dew, your pulse lulls
the tympani of my ears,
I feel immersed from head to foot,
Delicious, enough.

Enough O deed impromptu and secret,
Enough O gliding present—enough O summ'd-up past.

Dear friend whoever you are take this kiss,
I give it especially to you, do not forget me,

I feel like one who has done work for the day to retire
awhile,
I receive now again of my many translations, from my
avataras ascending, while others doubtless await me,
An unknown sphere more real than I dream'd, more direct,
darts awakening rays about me, *So long!*
Remember my words, I may again return,
I love you, I depart from materials,
I am as one disembodied, triumphant, dead.

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